A 22 P6

A DISCOURSE

Concerning the

Redeemer's Dominion over the Invisible World,

AND THE

Entrance thereinto by Death.

Some part whereof was preached on occasion of the Death of JOHN HOGHTON Esq; eldest Son of Sir *Charles Hoghton* of *Hoghton-Tower* in the County of *Lancaster*, Baronet.

By *JOHN HOWE*,
Minister of the Gospel.

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TO THE

Most deservedly Honoured,

AND

Truly Honourable,

Sir CHARLES AND THE Lady MARY } HOGHTON

Of *Hoghton-Tower.*

Grace, Mercy, and Peace, &c.

YOU *will, I know, count it no indecency, that, when God hath so nearly,* many Years ago, *join'd you, in* Relation, *in* Affection, *and* now, *so lately, in the* Affliction, *equally common to you both, I do also join* your Names *on the same paper, and*

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make this ſolemn Addreſs to you together.

It is by the ineſtimable favour of Heaven, that the mutual Intereſt God hath given you in each other, as it obliges, *doth alſo (as I have great reaſon to hope) effectually* diſpoſe *and* enable *you; ſo, not only to partake in the* Comforts, *but in the* Sorrows *that are common to you both, as that the* former *ſhall be* greatly increaſed, *and the* latter *proportionably* allay'd, *and* mitigated, *thereby. This is the Advantage of your* Conjugal State, *both* repreſented *in* God's Deſignation, *and* apprehended, *in your* own Experience.

And you are to conſider the Bleſſing of God herein, as having a peculiarity *in it, not being extended to all ſo related, neither to all that were great in this World, nor to all that were Pious, and Good.* Great worldly

worldly Felicity, *hath been rendered* inſipid *and* ſpiritleſs. *Great* Calamities, *much the more bitter, by the want of a meet* mutual helpfulneſs, *between* ſuch Relations.

A Great, *and a* Good Man *in his time. A Prince (as he is thought to have been) in his Country,* a Man that was perfect, and upright, one that feared God, and eſchewed Evil, *when he loſt not* one, *not the* eldeſt, only, *of his numerous Offspring, (as you have) but all at once, ſeven Sons, and three Daughters, with ſuch concomitant Circumſtances of accumulated Afflictions, as bleſſed be God, are not in your Caſe; and might now expect ſome relief, from* his other ſelf, *the neareſt and moſt inward Companion of his Life, and partaker of his Joys and Sorrows; All the Succour he hath from her, was an impious endeavour to provoke and* Job 1. 1.

irritate his Spirit, that taunting Scoff, Doſt thou ſtill retain thy Integrity? *and that horrid Advice,* Curſe God and Die. *Whereas that* rational, religious, Soul-compoſing *Thought,* ſhall we receive good things at the hand of God, and not alſo evil things? *was deeply fixed in the mind of* the one; *how much more effectually relieving had it been, if it had circulated between* both the Relatives; *and they had,* alternately, *propounded, and enlarged upon it, to* one another!

With you, I cannot doubt, it hath been ſo; and that you have made it your Buſineſs to improve your mutual Intereſt, not to aggravate, *but to* alleviate, *your Affliction* each *to* other.

You have, both of you, *great* occaſion, *and* obligation, *to revolve and recount to each other, the*

many

many good things you have received at the hand of God, *to mitigate what there is of* Evil, *in this dispensation.*

Both of you have sprung of Religious, and Honourable Families, favoured of God, valued, and beloved in the Countries where he had planted them. They have been both, seats *of Religion, and of the Worship of God.* The Resorts *of his Servants.* Houses of Mercy, *to the Indigent. Of* Justice, *to the vitious. Of* Patronage, *to the sober, and vertuous. Of* good Example, *to all about them.*

You were, both, *dedicated to God,* early, *and he gave* early Testimony *of his accepting the* Dedication. *He began with you both betimes, blessing your Education, and owning you for his, by disposing and forming your Spirits to own, betimes, the God of your Fathers. He hath*

bleſſed you indeed, *adding the ſpiritual Bleſſings in heavenly things, to your many earthly Comforts. Which* Jabez *might mean, not content, with a* common Bleſſing; *and the more probably, from the acceptance he found,* 1 Chron. 4. 9, 10. God granted his Requeſt, *as* Solomon's, 1 *Kings* 2. 10. *When* his *Requeſt was as little vulgar.*

You both *concurred, in the Dedication of* this your Son, *as in the reſt of yours; and I doubt not with great ſeriouſneſs; you Covenanted with* God in Chriſt, to be his God. *And if he enabled you to be* in good earneſt *herein, even* that *was of ſpecial Grace and Favour; and ought to come into the account of the many* good things you have received of God's hand, as offering to God willingly, *did, in the eſtimate of* David: *when the*

Oblation

Oblation was of a meaner kind, 1 Chron. 29. 14.

But then you ought to consider, what the import, *and* meaning *was* of that your Covenant, *wherein you* accepted God in Christ to be the God of your Son; *and dedicated him* to God *through Christ* to be his. *Was it not absolute, and without limitation? that God should be a God to him entirely, and without reserve? and that he should be* his, *absolutely, and be dispos'd of by him,* at his Pleasure? *Otherwise, there was a repugnancy, and contradiction, in* the very terms *of your Covenant. To be a God to him! Is not,* God, *the name of a Being incapable of limitation? Doth it not signify* infinite unlimited Power, and Goodness? *To be a God to any one, therefore,* under restriction, *is to be* a God *to him, and* no God. *And so to*

Cove-

Covenant with God, can neither have ſincerity *in it, nor* good ſenſe. *He can be under no reſtraint, in the exerciſes of his* Power, *and* Goodneſs *towards any, to whom he vouchſafes to be* their God in Covenant; *but* what *he is pleaſed to lay upon himſelf; which muſt be from his* own Wiſdom *and* good Pleaſure, *to which in covenanting we refer our ſelves; with* particular Faith, *in reference to what he hath expreſly promis'd; and with* general, *that all* ſhall be well, *where his* Promiſe *is not expreſs. But from our* ſelves, *nothing can be preſcribed to him. He muſt be* our all, *or* nothing; *in point of* Enjoyment *as our* Sovereign, all-comprehending Good; in point of Government, *as our* Sovereign all-diſpoſing Lord. *So we take him,* in Covenanting with him, *for* our ſelves, *and* ours. For *he* ſo propounds, *and offers himſelf,*

himſelf, to us; If we accept, *and take him accordingly, there is a Covenant between him and us, otherwiſe* we refuſe *him; and there is no Covenant.* When he promiſes, *as to* his part, *he promiſes* his all; *to be* God all-ſufficient *to us; to be* ours *in* all his Fulneſs, *according to our meaſure, and capacity: we are not ſtraitned in him, but in our ſelves. He undertakes to be to us, and do for us,* all *that it belongs to him,* as a God *to be, and do. To give us* Grace and Glory, *about which, there can be no diſpute, or doubt, they are always, and immutably good. And to* withhold from us no good thing, Here, *are comprehended, with the former, inferiour* good things, *about which, becauſe they are but* mutably, *and* not always good, *there may be a doubt, whether,* now *and* in preſent Circumſtances, *they will be good* for us, *or no. And* now, *it* belongs Pſal. 84. 11.

belongs *to him, as he is to* do the part of a God *to us, to judg and determine for us: for which he alone is competent, as being* God only wiſe, *and otherwiſe he were not* God all-ſufficient; *And not to leave that to us, who are ſo apt to be* partial, *and* miſtaken, *in our judgment.*

But when he makes his Demand from us, *of what we* on our part *are to be, and do; he demands* our all, abſolutely; *that we ſurrender* our ſelves *and* ours, *whatſoever we are, and have, to his pleaſure and diſpoſe, without other exception, or reſtriction, than* by his Promiſe, *he hath laid upon himſelf.*

Nor are we to think it ſtrange there ſhould be this difference, in the tenour of his Covenant, between his part *and* ours. *For we are to remember, The Covenant between* him, *and us, is not,* as of Equals; He *Covenants* as God; we, *as Creatures*; He, *according*

cording to the univerſal, infinite perfection and allſufficiency of a God, we, *according to the inſufficiency, imperfection and indigency of Creatures.*

Theſe things were (I doubt not) all foreknown, and, I hope, conſidered by you, when you ſo ſolemnly tranſacted with God, concerning this your Son; wherein you could not but then *take him for* your God, *as well as* his God. *It needs now only to be apply'd to the preſent Caſe; and it manifeſtly admits this Application,* viz.

That this his diſpoſal of him, in taking him, now, up to himſelf, to be glorify'd by him, *and to* glorify him, *in the Heavenly ſtate, was a thing then agreed upon, by ſolemn Covenant, between God and you. It was done by your own vertual, and unretracted conſent.* The ſubſtance *of the thing was agreed to expreſly;* that God ſhould be his God, *and*

finally,

finally, *make him happy, and bleſſed in himſelf. But if you ſay, you would only have had his* compleat Bleſſedneſs, *yet a while defer'd; I will only ſay, could you agree with* that God, whoſe he was, *and* whoſe you are, *about the* ſubſtance *of ſo great a Tranſaction, and now differ with him about a* Circumſtance? *And beſides, all Circumſtances muſt be comprehended in your Agreement. For taking him to be* your God, *you take him to be* Supream Diſpoſer *in all things: and* his Will *to be in every thing the Rule, and meaſure of yours. Which you have* expreſly *conſented to as often as you have pray'd, either* in the words, *or* after the tenour, *of* that Prayer, *wherein* our Lord *hath taught us to ſum up our Deſires, and repreſent the ſenſe of our Hearts.*

But beſides the Duty, *that is both by* his Law, *and by* Covenant-agree-

agreement, *owing to God, it is alſo to be conſidered, as an high* Dignity, *put upon you, to be the Covenanted-Parents of a glorified Son; a matter of greater boaſt, than if you could ſay* our Son (*to repeat what I formerly wrote*) *is* one of the greateſt Princes on Earth!

How far ſhould Paganiſm *be outdone, by* Chriſtianity! *which exhibits to our view* Death aboliſh'd! Life, and Immortality brought to light, by Jeſus Chriſt, in the Goſpel! 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. *Which ſets before us all the Glories of the* other World *in a bright repreſentation!* Which, *if we believe,* That Faith *will be to us, the* ſubſtance of what we hope for, and the evidence of what we ſee not. *Thus, tho you* ſaw not *the kind reception, and* abundant entrance *of this* Son of your Delights, *into the* everlaſting Kingdom, *it will yet be a thing* evident

to

to you; and your Faith will render it a great, and a most substantial Reality. Pagans *had but obscure glimmerings of such things; and in such afflicting Cases, when they have occurr'd, comparatively lank, and slender Supports; yet such as were not to be despis'd.*

Should I transcribe what I find written in way of Consolation *by* Plutarch *to* Apollonius, *upon the* loss of a Son, *you would see what would give both* Instruction *and* Admiration. *I shall mention some Passages. He praises the* young Person, *deceased, for his Comliness, Sobriety, Piety, dutifulness towards Parents, obligingness towards Friends, acknowledges* that Sorrow in the case of losing such a Son, hath (φυσικὸν ἀρχὴν) a principle in Nature, *and is of the things that are* (ἐκ τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν) not in our Power, *or which we cannot help;* That to be

destitute

deſtitute of it is neither poſſible, nor fit. That an Apathy, or inſenſibleneſs in ſuch a Caſe is no more deſireable, than that we ſhould endure to have a Limb, a part of our ſelves, cut, or torn off from us without feeling it. But yet affirms that immoderate Sorrow upon ſuch an occaſion is (δεινὸν φάνται) preternatural, and hath a pravity in it, and proceeds from a miſinform'd mind. That we ought in any ſuch Caſe to be neither (ἀπαθῆ, nor δυσπαθεῖς) *unaffected*, nor *ill affected*. *He tells his Friend a* Story (*The* meaning *whereof, is more conſiderable to us, than the* Credit *of it, as perhaps it was to him*) *concerning two* Græcian Youths, Cleobis *and* Biton, *whoſe* Mother having a Duty to perform in the Temple of *Juno*, and the Mules, not being

at hand, in the inſtant, when ſhe expected them, to draw her Chariot thither, they moſt officiouſly drew it themſelves; with which act of Piety their Mother was ſo tranſported, that ſhe made her Requeſt to *Juno*, on their behalf, that if there were any thing more deſirable unto Mortals, than other, ſhe would therewith reward her Sons; who thereupon threw them into a Sleep, out of which they awak'd no more. Thereby ſignifying, that *Death* was the beſt gift that could be beſtow'd upon Perſons of ſuch ſuppoſed Piety, as they!

To which purpoſe, *is what he relates concerning the Death of* Euthynous *an* Italian, *referr'd to, towards the cloſe of the following Diſcourſe.* Son, *and* Heir *to the ample Eſtate, of* Elyſius, *a Perſon of principal Dig-*

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nity among the Terinæans. To whom *anxiouſly enquiring of* Diviners, *concerning the cauſe of this Calamity*, the Spectre *of his Son, introduced by the Father of the latter, appear'd in his Sleep, ſhewing him certain* Greek Verſes, *the ſum whereof was, Thy Enquiry was Fooliſh.*

The Minds of Men are vain,
Euthynous reſts by a kindly decreed Death,
Becauſe his living longer, had neither been good for him, nor his Parents.

He afterwards adds, A good Man, *when he dies,* is worthy not ſo much of Lamentations, as of Hymns, and Praiſes.

He animadverts upon the aptneſs of Parents *to quarrel with any circumſtances of a* Son's death; *be they what they will.* If he die abroad,

then the aggravation is, that neither the *Father* nor the *Mother*, had Opportunity to close his Eyes; If at home, *then*, how is he pluck'd away, even out of our Hands!

He gives divers memorable instances, of sundry great Persons, bearing with strange composure of Mind, the same kind of Affliction. I omit what he *wrote to* his Wife *on their loss of a Child. As also to recite many, very instructive Passages, out of* Seneca *writing to* Marcia, *on the same account*, viz. *by way of Consolation, for her loss of a Son, and to* Helvia, *for her loss in the same kind. To* Polybius, *having lost a near Relation*, &c.

But we have the Oracles of God, *and do, too commonly, less* need *to receive Instruction from* Heathens, *than* deserve *to be reproached by them. That there*

there is ſo frequent Cauſe for the Complaint of that antient Worthy in the Chriſtian Church. Hierom. Non præſtat Fides quod præſtitit Infidelitas. *The* Infidelity of Pagans, *performs greater things than the* Faith *of* Chriſtians. *Their* ſedate Temper, *their* Maſtery *over turbulent Paſſions, may, in many inſtances, ſhame* our *impotency, and want of ſelf-government,* in like Caſes.

For who of them have ever had, or could have ſo great a thing to ſay, as is ſaid to us by the Word of the Lord, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 13. *For this very purpoſe,* that we may not ſorrow concerning them that are aſleep, even, as others, who have no hope, *i. e.* ver. 14. If we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again; even ſo, them alſo, which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him. *For*

ver. 15. this we ſay to you (*and 'tis ſaid by the forementionʼd Authority, the Lord himſelf having revealed it to this* great Apoſtle, *and directed him to ſay it*) that we who are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep. *Ver.* 16. For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God; and the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. *Ver.* 17. Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up, together with them, in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord. *Ver.* 18. Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.

I have tranſcribed theſe few Verſes, that they might readily appear to preſent view.

view. *And because all their* Efficacy, *and all our* Advantage *by them, depends upon our believing them; let us closely put the question to our selves, Do we believe them? or do we not? The Apostle seems to design the putting us upon this Self-reflection.* Ver. 14. *by inserting the supposition,* If we believe, --- *q. d. This will* effectually *do the business, of allaying all our hopeless Sorrow. For, if we believe that* one Fundamental Truth (*and therefore let us see whether we do or no*) *of* Christ's dying and rising again, *it will draw such a train of Consequences, all tending to fill our Souls with a* vital Joy, *as will leave no place for* undue Sorrow *any longer.* That Faith, *will be still urging and carrying us forward, will make us wholly intent upon* Prospect *and* Expectation. *What are we now to look for upon such a Foundation, so firmly laid, and fully*

believed? If we believe that Jesus died! *He did not submit* to die, *without* a design; *and* his rising again, *speaks him* Master of his Design: *and that he hath it now entirely in his Power. He died not* for himself, *but for them he was to redeem! And being now risen again, what must become of them! All that follows is now matter of glorious Triumph!*

If Plato, Plutarch *or* Seneca, *had but once had* such a Revelation *from Heaven as* this, *and had* that ground *to believe it*, that we have; *how full would their Writings have been of it! How had they abounded, in* lofty Paraphrases, *upon* every Period, *and* word *of it!*

The Faith of such things, *would surely make a* truly Christian Heart, *so earnestly press forward, in the* expectation

pectation *of the Great things*, ſtill to enſue, *as to leave it little leiſure for* retroſpection. *And this is the ſource of all our intemperate Sorrow, in ſuch a Caſe as this, our framing to our ſelves pleaſing ſuppoſitions, of* being as we were, *with* ſuch, *and* ſuch Friends *and* Relatives *about us, as we heretofore enjoy'd. As* hope *of what is future, and deſireable, feeds* our Joy; *ſo,* Memory *of good things paſt, doth our* Sorrow. *In ſuch a Caſe as this, which the Apoſtle* here *ſpeaks to, the deceaſe of our dear Friends, and Relatives,* fall'n aſleep; *we are apt to* look back, *with a lingering Eye, upon that former ſtate of things: and to ſay, as he,* O mihi preteritos—*O* that God would recall for me the Years that are gone over—! *Or, as in ſacred Language,* O that I were as in Months paſt—*When the ſecret of* God was upon Job 29. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

upon my Tabernacle. When the Almighty was yet with me; when my Children were about me!

What pleaſant Scenes *do we form to our ſelves, afreſh, of* paſt things, *on purpoſe to foment* preſent Sorrow! *And whether we have that deſign or no, we are more prone to* look back *to* former things *we have known, than* forward to future, *we know not; eſpecially, if the further we look back, the leſs we find of Trouble intermingl'd in our former Courſe. A ſmooth and pleaſant Path we would go over again, if* Reaſon, *and the* neceſſity of Affairs *do not recall us, and urge us forward.*

And ſo, Sir, might you find matter for a very copious, and not ingrateful recollection, to call over again, and revolve in your Thoughts, the

the pleaſures of your Youth, (more innocent than of many others,) when you were incumbered with no Cares, entertain'd with various Delights, of one ſort and another, in this or that *pleaſant Seat of* your Parents. *But how remote is it from you,* upon Conſideration, *to wiſh your ſelf back, into your* juvenile State, *and* Circumſtances? *How much a more generous, and God-like pleaſure is it, to be doing good in the World, and ſtill to abound therein, to go forward, and do ſtill more and more!*

And, Madam, who could have a more pleaſant Retroſpect, *upon former days, than you? recounting your Antrim Delights! the delight you took in your excellent Relations, your Garden Delights, your Cloſet-delights, your Lords-days delights! But how much a greater thing is it to*

ſerve

ſerve God in your preſent Station! as the Mother *of a* numerous and hopeful Offspring? *as the* Miſtreſs *of a* large Family; *where you bear your part,* with your like-minded Conſort, *in ſupporting the* Intereſt of God and Religion! *and have opportunity of ſcattering Bleſſings round about you!*

But our Buſineſs is not recurring, *or* looking back. *God is continually calling us* forward. Time *is a* ſtream, running on, *towards the* vaſt Ocean. Tending backward, *is vain ſtriving againſt the Stream. And as it is the Courſe, and Method, of* Nature, *of* Providence, *and* Grace, *to* tend forward, *and carry us from* leſs *to* greater *things,* in this World. *So* do all theſe *conſpire, to carry us on, becauſe our ἀκμὴ, our higheſt pitch, cannot be* here; *to*

yet

yet far greater *things in the* greater World. *Of* which vaſt World, *it is the Deſign of the* following Diſcourſe *to give you* ſome account; *tho, God knows, it is but a* very imperfect one. Such as it is, *if God only make it an occaſion to you, of fixing your Minds and Hearts upon* that mighty Theme, *you will find it eaſy and pleaſant to you to amplify upon it, and enlarge it* to your ſelves. *And thereby, through God's Bleſſing, I doubt not, arrive to a fulneſs of Satisfaction, concerning* this late Diſpenſation, *which hath a gloominеſs upon it; but is in very deed only gloomy,* on one ſide, *viz.* downwards, *and towards* this wretched World, *this Region of* Sorrow *and* Darkneſs: *but* on the ſide, upwards, *and towards* that other World, *which caſts its luſtre upon it, its*

Phaſis,

Phaſis, *and* appearance, *will be altogether* bright *and* glorious. *And the more you look by a believing intuition into that* other World, *where our* Bleſſed Redeemer, *and* Lord, *bears rule, in ſo* Tranſcendent Glory; *the more will you be above all the* cloudy Darkneſs, *of this* event of Providence, *towards* your ſelves, *and your* Family. *Herein, your peruſal of* this very defective Eſſay, *may be of* ſome uſe *to you. And I reckon'd it might be of* more laſting *and* permanent uſe *to* you, and yours after you, *and to* as many others, *into whoſe hands it might fall,* as a little Book, *than* as one ſingle Sermon.

You will, however, I doubt not, apprehend in it, the ſincere deſire

site *to aſſiſt you in this your preſent, difficult Trial; followed by the* faithful Endeavour, *of*

Moſt Honoured in the Lord,

May 17. 1699. *Your very reſpectful*

and obliged Servant,

in him,

and for his ſake,

JOHN HOWE.

Rev. 1. 18.

——*And have the Keys of Hell* (*Hades*, or the unſeen World) *and of Death.*

THE *peculiar* occaſion of this *preſent Solemnity*, I mean, that is additional to the uſual buſineſs of the Lord's Day, may be ſomewhat amuſing to narrower and leſs conſidering minds, *i. e.* That I am now to take notice to you of (what the moſt would call) the premature, or untimely death of a moſt hopeful Young Gentleman, the Heir of a very conſiderable Family, greatly prepared by parts and pious Sentiments, and further preparing by ſtudy and converſation, to be uſe-

† Ostendunt terris hunc tantùm fata nec ultra esse sinunt. *Virgil.*

ful to the Age, cut off in his prime, when the meer *shewing him* † to the World had begun to raise an expectation in such as knew him, of somewhat more than ordinary hereafter from him, his future advantageous circumstances, being considered, of which you will hear further towards the close of this Discourse.

Nor did I know any passage in the whole sacred Volume, more apt to serve, the best & most valuable purpose, in such a case, than the words now read; none more fitted *to enlarge* our minds, to *compose* them, and reduce to a due temper *even theirs* who are *most concern'd*, and most liable to be disturb'd, or to instruct us all how to interpret and comment aright upon so perplexing, and so intricate a Providence as *this* at the first, and slighter view may seem unto us. In

In order whereto our buſineſs muſt be to

{*Explain* and *Apply*} this moſt weighty awful ſaying.

1. For the *Explication*, theſe 3 things are to be enquired into.

1. *Who it is* that claims, and aſſerts to himſelf this *Power* here *ſpoken* of?

2. *What it is* about which this *claimed Power* is to be converſant?

3. *What ſort of Power* it is that this *emblematical expreſſion*, ſignifies to belong to him?

1. *Who it is that claims the Power here ſpoken of?*. Where the Enquiry is not ſo much concerning *the Perſon* that makes this claim; which all the foregoing context puts out of queſtion to be *our Lord Chriſt*. But touching the *ſpecial notion* and *capacity* wherein he claims it, and accord-

ing whereto it muſt be underſtood to belong to him.

And whereas he is deſcribed by very diſtinct *Titles*, and *Attributes*, promiſcuouſly interwoven in the preceding *verſes of the chapter*, *viz.* that ſometimes he is introduced ſpeaking *in the ſtile of a God*; as *ver.* 8. *I am* Alpha, *and Omega, the beginning, and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* And again, *v* 11. *I am* Alpha, *and* Omega. But that ſometimes he is repreſented in the *form of a Man*, and accordingly deſcribed even from *head to foot*, and ſaid to appear in the Viſion that exhibits him, *as one like the Son of Man*, that we might certainly underſtand him ſo to be, *verſe* 13, 14, 15, 16. And ſuch things ſaid of him as are incident to a *Mortal Man*, the ſhedding of

his

his Blood, *verſe* 5. and that *he was dead, verſe* 18. *former part.* Yea and expreſſions of this different import intermingled, that we might know it was the *ſame Perſon* that was *continuedly* ſpoken of under theſe ſo vaſtly different Characters, as, *I am the firſt and the laſt*; *I am he that liveth and was dead, verſe* 17. 18. We may thereupon very reaſonably conclude that he is not here to be conceiv'd under the *one notion* or the *other*, *neither as God*, nor *as Man*, ſeparately or *excluſively of each other*; but as both together, as Θεάνθρωπος, as *God-man*, under which conjunct notion, he receives, and ſuſtains the Office of our *Redeemer*, and *Mediator* between *God*, and *Man*.

Which will enable us the more clearly to anſwer the third Enquiry, when we come to it, con-

cerning the *Kind of that Power*, which is here claimed. And which, becauſe there can be no doubt of the juſtice of his claim, we are hereby taught to aſcribe to him.

For the management whereof, we are alſo *hence* to reckon him every way competent; that he was *par negotio*, that it was not too big for him. No expreſſions being uſed to ſignifie his *true Humanity*, but which are joyned with *others*, as appropriate to *Deity*. And that nothing therefore obliges us to narrow it more than the following account imports; which we are *next* to enquire about; *viz.*

2. *The large extent of the object about which the Power he here claims, is to be converſant.* i. e. *Hades* (as we read, *Hell* but which is truly to be read) *the unſeen World, and Death.*

The

The *former of theſe*, we with a debaſing limitation, and (as I doubt not will appear) very unreaſonably do render *Hell*.

The Power belonging to Chriſt, we are *elſewhere taught* to conceive is of unſpeakably greater latitude. And *here* we are *not taught* to confine it to ſo vile & narrow limits, as this tranſlation gives it. All things in the Context Conſpire to magnifie him, and, agreeably hereto to magnifie his Dominion. When therefore the apparent deſign is to ſpeak him *great*, that he ſhould only be repreſented as the Jaylor of Devils, and their companions, is, to me unaccountable; unleſs a very manifeſt neceſſity did induce to it.

From the word ἅδης, there can be no pretence for it. Tho' it ought to be *extended*, it is by no means to be *reſtrained* to that

ſenſe: Which as it is the *ignobleſt*, ſo it will appear but a very *ſmall*, *minute* part of its ſignification; whether we conſider the *literal import*, or the *common uſe* of the word.

Literally it ſignifies, but *what we ſee not*, or *what is out of our ſight*.

And as the word of which it is compounded ſignifies alſo *to know*, as well as *to ſee*, it may further ſignifie, *that ſtate of things which lies without the compaſs of our knowledge*, even out of the reach of our *mental ſight*; or concerning which, tho' we are to believe what is revealed, we cannot *immediately*, or diſtinctly *know* it; and in reference whereto, therefore, we are *to walk by Faith, not by ſight*, 2 Cor. 5. 7.

And the *common uſe* of the word, hath been very agreeable hereto; with *Writers* of all ſorts, *i e.* to ſignifie

ſignifie indefinitely the *unſeen World*; or the *ſtate of the deceaſed out of our World*, who are, conſequently, gone out of our ſight, whether they were *good* or *bad*; ſo as not *peculiarly* to ſignifie *Hell*, or any place, or ſtate of *Torment*, *only*.

It were eaſie to abound in *Quotations* to this purpoſe, if it were either *needful*, or *proper* in a Diſcourſe *of this nature*.

What I intend in this kind, I ſhall only ſet down on the *by* in the Margin, upon which they *that will* may caſt their Eye †; that the Diſcourſe be not interrupted *as to others* that either have no

† And here it may ſuffice to take notice that *Greek Writers*, *Poets*, *Philoſophers*, *Hiſtorians*; and *other Writers*, that have made only *occaſional* mention of this word ἅδης, or of the words next akin to it ἀϊδὴς, or ἀϊδνὸς, or *Lexicographers*, that have *purpoſely* given an account of it, from *Greek Authors*, that muſt be ſuppoſed beſt to underſtand the uſe of words in their own Tongue; generally ſuch as have not been engaged in a Controverſie, that

no need *to be informed* in this matter, having known as much before, as that obliges men usually to torture words to their own sense, or to *serve the Hypothesis*, which they had espoused; have been remote from confining *this*, or the *cognate words*, to that narrow sense as only to signifie *a place or state of torment for bad men*, but understood it as comprehending also, *a state of felicity* for the *pious and good*.

For such as have been concern'd in interpreting this or other like words with reference to the known, and famous Controversie, which I need not mention, their Judgments must weigh according to the reputation they are of with the Reader.

The *Greeks*, no doubt, best understood their own Language. And among them can we think that *Homer* in the beginning of his 1. Il. when he speaks of the many brave Souls of his *Hero's*, those ἰφθιμους ψυχας, which the War he is describing, sent into the invisible Regions, ἄϊδι προϊαψεν, that he ever dreamt they were all promiscuously dispatcht away to a place of Torment. Not to mention other passages where he uses the the word ἄϊδης to the same purpose. Divers others of of the *Greek Poets* are cited by several ready to our hands, with which I shall not cumber these pages. *That one* is enough, and nothing can be fuller to our purpose, which is quoted by *Clem. Alexandr. Str. l.* 5. (as well as by sundry others) and ascribed to the *Comic. Diphilus* (tho' by others to another, *Philemon.*)

Καὶ γὰ καθ' ἁδὸυ δύο τρίβους νομίζομεν
Μίαν δικαίων, κατέρχεσθ' ἀσεβῶν ὁδόν.

In

as can be now told them; or *no inclination to be diverted* from their preſent purpoſe in reading; apprehending that what is generally told them, only concerning the uſual ſignification of a word, is not ſaid without ſome ground.

And

In Hades we reckon there are two paths, the one of the righteous, the other of the wicked, plainly ſhewing that *Hades* was underſtood to contain *Heaven*, and *Hell*. *Plato*, when in his *Phædo*, he tells us that he that comes into *Hades*, ἀμύητος, ἀτέλεστος, not initiated and duly prepared, is thrown into βόρβορος, (a ſtinking Lake) but he that comes into it fitly purified, ſhall dwell with the Gods; as expreſly ſignifies *Hades* to include the ſame oppoſite ſtates of miſery and felicity. In that Dialogue called *Axiochus*, tho' ſuppoſed not to be his, written by one that ſufficiently knew the meaning of ſuch a word, we are told that *when Men die they are brought into the* Πεδίον ἀληθείας, *the Field of Truth, where ſit Judges that examine* τίνα βίον, *what manner of life every one lived while he dwelt in the body*, that they who while they liv'd here were inſpir'd by a good *Genius*, or Spirit, go into the Region of pious Men, having before they came into *Hades* been purified——ſuch as led their lives wickedly are hurried by Furies up and down Chaos——in the Region of the wicked. In the third Book *de Repub. Plato* blames the *Poets* that they repreſent the ſtate of things in *Hades* too frightfully, when they ſhould μᾶλλον ὑμνεῖν, praiſe it rather. *Plutarch*

And let Texts of Scripture be consulted about *that*, how *Hades*, and (the correspondent word in the O. T.) *Sheol*, are used there. If

tarch de Superst. brings in *Plato* speaking of *Hades*, as a Person, or a God, *Dis*, or *Pluto* (as they frequently do) *and says he is* φιλάνθρωπος, *benign or friendly to Men*; therefore not a tormentor of them only. *Celius Rhodigin.* quotes this same passage of *Platarch*, and takes notice that our *Saviour* speaks of the state of Torment by another word, not *Hades*, but *Gehenna*; which sufficiently shews how he understood it himself.

And whereas there are who disagree to *this notation* of this word, that makes it signifie *unseen*, as some will fetch it from the Hebr. and go as far back as *Adam* in their search, alledging *for this* the Authority of an old *Sibyll*, will have it go for ἀιδὴς, and signifie as ἀηδὴς, unpleasant; nothing is plainer than *that this* other is the common notion, which (tho' Fancy hath not a greater Dominion in any thing than in Etymology) would make one shy of stretching invention to find how to differ from the generality. Therefore *Calepin*, upon this word, tells us that the *Greek Grammarians*, do against the nature of the *Etymon* (which plainly enough shews what they understood *that* to be) generally direct its beginning to be writ with the *asper spirit*; but yet *he* makes it signifie *obscure*, or not *visible*. And tho' *Plato* is endeavoured to be hook't in to the deriving it from *Adam* by a very far fetch; yet 'tis plain that his calling it τὸν ἀιδῆ, in a place before referr'd to, shews he understood it to signifie *invisible*. And so *Lexicons* will commonly

If we take the Help of *Interpreters*, the impartial Reader is to judge of their Fidelity, and Ability who go our way *.

Upon

commonly derive it (*Vulgo*, says *Cælius. Rhodis.*) But its extensiveness, *as comprehending a state of happiness*, is our principal concern, which way (as we might shew by many more instances) the common stream carries it. *Pausanias* in his 'ΑΡΚΑΔΙΚΑ, speaking of *Hermes* (according to *Homer*) as Δίος διάκτορον, and that he did lead Souls ὑπὸ τὴν ἄδην, could not be thought to mean, they were then universally miserable. *Sext. Empir.* is an Authority good enough for the meaning of a *Greek word*. When (*Adversus Mathem.*) he tells us, tho' by way of objection, all men have a common notion περὶ τῆς ἐν ἅδῃ, (using the *Genitive* with ἐν, as *Homer*, and others do, another word *house*, or *abode*, in the *Dative*, being understood) And yet, *as to the thing*, he afterwards distinguishes *Poets Fables*, and what *from the nature of the Soul it self*, all have a common apprehension of. As also *Diog. Laert.* hath the *same phrase*, mentioning the Writings of *Protagoras*, who, he says, wrote one Book περὶ τῆς ἐν ἅδῃ, using the Genitive, as *here*, after 'ἐν, as hath been usual, on the mentioned account. And tho' his Books were burnt by the *Athenians*, because of the dubious Title of one of them *concerning the Gods*. So that we have not opportunity to know, what his Opinion of *Hades* was, we have reason more than enough, to think he understood it not of a state of Torment only for Evil Spirits.

* Primate *Usher*'s Judgment may be seen in his Answer to the *Jesuits Challenge*, that this word properly signifies

Upon the whole, it being moſt evident, that *Hell*, is but a *ſmall*, and

ſignifies *the other World, the place or ſtate of the Dead —So that Heaven it ſelf may be comprehended in it. Grot.* on *Luk.* 16. 23. Makes *Hades* moſt *certainly to ſignifie a place withdrawn from our ſight; ſpoken of the body, the grave; of the ſoul, all that Region wherein 'tis ſeparate from the body. So that as* Dives *was in* Hades, *ſo was* Lazarus *too, but in ſeparate Regions.—For both Paradiſe, and Hell, or as the Greeians were wont to ſpeak*) *Elyſii* and *Tartara were in Hades.* You may have in him more Quotations from the *Poets*, the ſenſe of the *Eſſenes* from *Joſephus*, and paſſages from divers of the Fathers to the ſame purpoſe. *Dr. Hammonds* mind was the ſame, copiouſly expreſt on *Matt.* 11. 20. But differs from *Grot.* in aſcribing to *Philemon*, the *Jambicks* above recited, which the other gives to *Diphilus*. *Dr. Lightfoot* is full to the ſame purpoſe. On the 4th Art. of the Creed. And tho' *Bellarmin* will have *this word* always ſignifie *Hell* (which if it do with *Sheol* the correſpondent word; *Jacob* deſired to go to Hell to his Son, as *Dr. H.* argues.)

Camero (as good a Judge) thinks, *except once, it never does.* If any deſire to ſee more to this purpoſe with little trouble to themſelves, let them peruſe *Martinius*'s Lexic. on the word *Inferus*, or *Infernus*. I could refer them to many more whom I forbear to mention.

Only if any think in ſome or other Text of Scripture this word muſt ſignifie *Hell* only, ſince it is of that latitude as to ſignifie *Heaven* in other places, an impartial view of the circumſtances of the Text, muſt determine whether *there*, it be meant of the *one*, or the *other*, or *both*.

and *mean* part of what is ſignified by *Hades*, it will be very unreaſonable to *repreſent* or *conceive of*, the Power *here* aſcribed to our Lord, according to that *narrow notion* of it. And would be a like incongruity, as if, to magnifie the Perſon of higheſt Dignity, in the Court of a mighty Prince, one ſhould ſay, *He is the Keeper of the Dungeon.*

The word it ſelf, indeed, *properly* taken, and according to its juſt extent *mightily greatens him i.e.* 'tis as much as to ſay, *his Dominion is of unknown limits*; ſuch as no Eye can meaſure. We think with a ſort of veneration, of what is repreſented as too big for our knowledge. We have a natural awe and reverence for unſearchable darkneſs. But in the mean time we *herein* ſuffer a *juſt diminution of our ſelves*; that when our enquiry

quiry ſtops, and can proceed no further, it being but a very little part of the Univerſe that lies within our compaſs, having tir'd our enquiring Eye, and Mind, upon all the reſt we write *Hades*, call it *unſeen*, or *unknown*.

And becauſe we call it ſo; *in reference to us*, God himſelf calls it ſo too. It being his way (as is obſerved, by that noted Jew *) ſpeaking to men, to *uſe the tongue of the children of men*, to ſpeak to them in their own language, and allow them to coin their own words. Which at firſt they often do very *occaſionally*; nor, as to *this*, could they have a fairer, or a more urgent *occaſion*, or that is more ſelf-juſtifying than *in one word* to ſay of *that other* World, that it is *Hades* or *inviſible*, when that is truly *all* that they have to ſay, or can have any immediate notice of about it. It

* *Maimonides.*

It hath therefore its riſe from our ſelves, and the penury of our knowledge of things. And is at once both an ingenuous confeſſion, with ſome ſort of modeſt cover, and excuſe of our own ignorance. As with *Geographers*, all that part of *this Globe*, which they cannot deſcribe, is *Terra incognita*; and with *Philoſophers*, ſuch *Phænomena*, in nature, as they can give no account of, they reſolve, ſhortly and in the moſt compendious way, into ſome or other *occult quality*, or ſomewhat elſe, as *occult*.

How happy were it, if in *all matters* that concern Religion, and *in this*, as it doth ſo, they would ſhut up in a ſacred venerable Darkneſs, *what* they cannot *diſtinctly perceive*, it being once by *the undeceiving Word* expreſly aſſerted, *that it is*, without, there-

fore, denying *its reality*, becauſe they clearly apprehend not *what it is*.

With too many their Religion is *ſo little*, and their pride and ſelf-conceit *ſo great*, that they think themſelves fit to be Standards. That their *Eye* or *Mind*, is of a ſize large enough to meaſure the *Creation*; yea and the *Creator* too. And by how much they have the leſs left them *of Mind*, or the more it is ſunk into Earth and Carnality, the more capable it is of being the meaſure of *all reality* of taking the compaſs, of *all being*, *created* and *uncreated*. And ſo that of the *Philoſopher* takes place in the worſt ſenſe can be put upon it [*to ſee Darkneſs is to ſee nothing*] All is *nullity* that their ſenſe reaches not. *Hades* is *with ſuch*, indeed, empty, imaginary, Darkneſs; or in plainer Engliſh *there*

there is neither Heaven nor Hell, becauſe they ſee them not.

But we ought to have the greater thoughts of it, not the leſs, for its being too big, too great, too glorious for our preſent view: And that it muſt as yet, reſt, as to us, and ſo let it reſt a while, under the name of *Hades*. The unknown Dominion of our great Lord. According to that moſt expreſs account he at his Aſcenſion gave of the Exiſtence of *both parts* together, *that* leſs known to us, and *that* more known, *Matt.* 28. 18. *All power is given to me both in Heaven and Earth.*

That *Death* is added, as contained alſo within the limits of our Lord's *Dominion*, doth *expreſly ſignifie* his cuſtody of the paſſage from this *Viſible World* to the *Inviſible*; *viz.* as he commands the entrance into *each diſtinct part* of

Hades, the *Inviſible World*, conſiſting of both *Heaven*, and *Hell*, ſo he hath power over *Death* too, which is the common out-let from this World, and the paſſage unto both.

But it withall *plainly implies*, His very abſolute Power over this Viſible World of ours alſo: For it ſignifies he hath the power of meaſuring every ones time *here*, and how long each Inhabitant of this World ſhall live in it. If it belong to him to determine when any one ſhall die, it muſt by conſequence belong to him to aſſign the portion and *dimenſum* of time that every one ſhall live. Nor is there any conceivable moment in the time of any ones life, wherein he hath not this power of putting a period by death thereunto, at his own pleaſure. He is therefore ſignified to have the power

power of every man's *life* and *death* at once. And the Power of Life and Death is very high and great Power. He therefore herein implicitly claims, what is elſewhere expreſly aſcribed to him, *Rom.* 14. 7,8,9. *None---lives to himſelf, (i.e. de jure,* no man ſhould) *or dies to himſelf:* For *whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die to the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lords. For to this end Chriſt both died, and roſe again, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the dead and living.*

In ſumm, *here* is aſſerted to him a *Dominion* over *both Worlds*; *this*, in which we live, and *that*, into which we die, whether the *one* or the *other part of it.* And ſo *in reference to Men*, who once have inhabited this World, the ſenſe of *this Text*, and *that* we are

insisting on, is *the same*. Tho' *Hades* is of vastly larger extent than only to be the receptacle of such as have liv'd *here*; it having also, *in both the parts of it*, innumerable Inhabitants who never had a dwelling assigned them in this World of ours at all.

But thus far we have the vast extent of our Lord Christ's Dominion, competently cleared to be the proper intendment of this Text. And that it never meant so faint and minute a representation of it, as only to make him Keeper of the *bottomless Pit*. Tho' of that also he hath *the Key*; as we shall further take notice. But are, now to enquire of, what will tak up less time.

3. The *Kind of that Power* over so vast a Realm, or manifold Realms, signified by this *emblematical* expression, of *having the Keys*, &c. Every

Every one knows, that *the Keys* are *Insignia*; some of the tokens of Power; and *according to the peculiarity of the Object*, may be, of *Divine Power*.

The Jews, as some *Writers* of their Affairs say, appropriate the Keys of *three*, others of *four* things to God only. *Of Life*, or the entrance into this World. *Of the Rain*, or the Treasures of the Clouds. *Of the Earth* (say some *) as of the Granary of Corn. And of the *Grave*. *Of which*, says one of their own. ---*The Holy Blessed, one hath the Keys of the Sepulchres in his hand, &c.* And, as we may be sure he admits thither, so he emits from thence; and (as he says) *in the future Age, the H. B. one will unlock the Treasures of Souls, and will open the Graves, and bring every Soul back into its own body, &c.*

* *Weems.*

Pirke. R. Eliezer. Edit. per G. H. Varst. C. F.

Nor is *this Key* of the vaſt *Hades*, when it is in the hand of our Redeemer, the leſs in the hand of the Holy, Bleſſed One; for *ſo is he* too. But it is in his hand *as belonging to his Office, of Mediator* between God and Man, as was before ſaid. And *properly* the *phraſe* ſignifies *Miniſterial Power*, being a manifeſt alluſion to the common uſage, in the Courts of Princes, of entruſting to ſome *great Miniſter* the Power of the Keys; as it was foretold of *Eliakim*, *Iſa.* 22. that he ſhould be placed in the ſame high ſtation in *Hezekiahs* Court, wherein *Shebna* was, of whom ſo ſevere things are *there* ſaid; and that *the Key of the Houſe of David, ſhould be laid upon his ſhoulder, &c. ver.* 20, 21, 22. And the *Houſe of David*, being a known Type of the *Houſe* or *Church of God*; and

and he himſelf, *of Chriſt*, who, *as the Son, hath power over the whole houſe*, according to this typical way of ſpeaking our Lord is ſaid, *Rev. 3. 7. to have the Key of* David, *to open ſo as none can ſhut, to ſhut ſo as none can open, i. e.* to have a final deciſive power in all he doth, from which there is no appeal.

Nor could any thing be more congruous, than that having the Keys of the *Celeſtial Houſe of God*, the Heavenly Palace of the Great King, the *Habitation of his Holineſs and Glory*, in which are the Everlaſting Habitations, the many Manſions, the *Places* prepared for his Redeemed; he ſhould alſo have *the Keys* of the *Terreſtrial Bethel*; which is but a ſort of *Portal*, or *Veſtibulum* to the other. *The Houſe of God, and the Gate of Heaven.* And as he is implied

to

to have the Keys of this *introductive, preparatory Kingdom of Heaven* (as the *Keys of the Kings Palace*, where is the Throne or Seat of Government; and *the Keys of the Kingdom* muſt mean the ſame thing) when he is ſaid to *give* them to the Apoſtle *Peter*, and the other Apoſtles: This was but a *Prelude*, and a *minute Inſtance* of his Power of thoſe Keys of *Hades*, and of the glorious Heavenly Kingdom it ſelf contained therein, which he was not to delegate, but to manage himſelf immediately in his own Perſon.

If moreover *he* were ſignified by the Angel, *Rev.* 20. 1. who was ſaid to *have the Key of the bottomleſs Pit*; *That* alſo muſt import a Power, tho' great in it ſelf, yet very little in compariſon of the immenſe *Hades*, of which he is *here* ſaid to have the Keys.

So

So remote is it, that the Power aſcribed to him *there*, ſhould be the *meaſure* of what he here aſſets to himſelf: And the difference muſt be vaſtly greater than it is poſſible for us to conceive, or parallel, by the difference between having Power over the Palace, & all the moſt delightful & moſt ſpacious Territories in the vaſteſt Empire of the greateſt Prince, and only *having Power* over a Dungeon in ſome obſcure corner of it Which for the great purpoſes, whereto all this is it be applied, we can can ſcarcely too much inculcate.

And to ſuch application let us now with all poſſible ſeriouſneſs and intention of ſpirit, addreſs our ſelves. Which will conſiſt in ſundry Inferences, or Deductions, laying before us ſome ſuitable matter,

Partly

Partly of our { *Meditation*, / *Practice*.

The former whereof are to prepare, and lay a ground for the latter.

1. Divers things we may collect that will be very proper for our *deep Meditation*; which I ſhall propoſe not as things that we can be ſuppos'd not to have *known* before, but which are, too commonly, not enough *thought on*, or *conſidered*.

And *here* we ſhall ſomewhat invert the order wherein things lye in the *Text*, beginning with what is there *latter* and *lower*, and thence ariſing, with more advantage, to what is higher, and of greater concernment. As,

1. *That Men do not die at random*, or by ſome uncertain, acci- accidental by ſtroak, that as by a ſlip

ſlip of the hand, cuts off the thred of Life; but by an act of *Divine Determination*, and *Judgment*, that paſſes in reference to each ones Death. For as *the Key* ſignifies *Authority* and Power, the *turning this Key of Death*, that gives a Man his *Exit* out of this World, is an *Authoritative Act*. And do we conſider in what hand *this Power* is lodg'd? we cannot but apprehend every ſuch act is the effect of Counſel and Judgment.

What *Philoſophers* are wont to diſcourſe of *fortuitous* Events in reference to *Rational Agents*, or *Caſual*, in reference to *Natural*, muſt be underſtood but *with relation to our ſelves*, and ſignifies only our own ignorance of futurities; but can have no place in the *all-comprehending Mind*, as if any thing were a *contingency* unto *that*. For them that live as if they

they thought they came into this World *by chance*; 'tis very natural to them to think they ſhall die, and go out of it, *by chance* too, but, *when*, and *as*, it happens. This is worſe than Paganiſh Blindneſs; for beſides what from *their Poets*, the vulgar have been made to believe concerning the *three fatal Siſters*, to whom they aſcribed no leſs than Deity concern'd in meaſuring every ones Life. The grave diſcourſes which ſome of them have writ *concerning Providence*, and its extent to the leſſer intermediate concerns *of Life*, much more to that their final great concern *of Death*, will be a ſtanding Teſtimony againſt the too-prevailing *Chriſtian Scepticiſm* (they ought to excuſe the Solœciſm, who make it) of this wretched Age! But ſuch among us as will allow themſelves the liberty

liberty *to think*, want not opportunity, and means by which they may be aſſur'd, that not an *imaginary*, but *real Deity* is immediately and conſtantly concern'd in meaſuring our Time in this World. What an awful thought is this! And it leads to a

2 Inference. *That it is a great thing to die.* The Son of God, the Redeemer of man hath an immediate preſidency over this affair He ſignalizes himſelf by it, who could not ſuppoſe, he ſhould be magnified by a trifle! We ſlightly ſay, *ſuch a one is Dead*! Conſider the matter *in it* ſelf, and 'tis *great.* A *reaſonable Soul* hath chang'd States! an *intelligent Spirit* is gone out of our world! The life of a Gnat, a Fly, thoſe little *Automata*, or ſelf moving things, how admirable a production is it! It becomes no man

man to deſpiſe what no man can imitate. We praiſe the Pencil that well deſcribes the external figure of ſuch an *Animalculum*, ſuch a little Creature, but the internal vital, ſelf moving power, and the motion itſelf, what *Art* can expreſs! But *an humane life* how important a thing is it! Twas one of *Plato*'s thankſgivings *that God had made him a man*! How careful a guard hath God ſet over every mans life! fencing it by the ſevereſt Law. *If any man ſhed mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed*; and how weighty is the annexed reaſon! *For in the image of God he made man.* This then highly greatens this matter. He therefore reſerves it wholly to himſelf, as one of his *peculiarities*, to diſpoſe of ſuch a life! *I am he that kills and makes alive.* We find it One of his

his *high titles, The God of the Spirits of all fleſh.* He had what was *much greater* to glory in, that he was *The Father of ſpirits,* indefinitely ſpoken When he hath all the heavenly Regions, the ſpacious *Hades,* Peopled with ſuch Inhabitants *whoſe dwelling is not with fleſh;* (and for vaſt multitudes of them) that never was, that yet, looking down into this little world of ours, this minute ſpot of his creation, and obſerving that here were *Spirits dwelling in fleſh,* he ſhould pleaſe to be ſtyl d alſo the God *of thoſe Spirits,* ſignifies this to be with him too an appropriate glory, a glory which he will not communicate farther then he communicates *Godhead.* And that he held it a *divine right* to meaſure the time unto each of them of *their abode in fleſh,* & determine when they ſhall diſlodge.

This cannot be thought on-

 aright,

aright, without a becoming, moſt profound reverence of him *on this account*. How ſharp a rebuke is given to that haughty Prince, *The God in whoſe hands thy breath is haſt thou not glorified.* Dan. 5. 23. *That* would prepare the way, and we ſhould be eaſily led on, were we once come to *think with reverence*, to think alſo *with pleaſure*, of this caſe, that our life, and every breath we draw, is under ſuch a Divine Superintendency. The H. Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of it with high complacency, as the matter of *his Song*, that he had a God preſiding over his life. So he tells us he would have each νυχθήμερον, compoſed not more of *Night* and *Day*, than of *Prayer* and *Praiſe* directed to God under this notion, *as the God of his life*, *Pſal.* 42. 8. And he ſpeaks it not grudgingly, but as the ground of his

his *truſt* and *boaſt*, *Pſal.* 31. 14,15. *---I truſted in thee, O Lord, I ſaid thou art my God, my times are in thy hand.* That *this Key* is in the hand of the *Great Emmanuel, God with us*, will be thought on *with frequency*; when it is thought on *with delight.*

3. *Our Life on Earth is under the conſtant ſtrict obſervation of our Lord Chriſt.* He waits when to *turn the Key*, and ſhut it up. Thro' the whole of that time, which, by deferring, he meaſures out to us, we are under his Eye as in a ſtate of probation. He takes continual notice how we acquit our ſelves. For his turning the Key, at laſt, is a judicial act; therefore *ſuppoſes* diligent obſervation, and *proceeds*, upon it. He that hath this Key, is alſo ſaid in the next Chapter, *verſe* 18. *to have Eyes like a flame of fire*; with *theſe* he obſerves

what *he hath againſt* one or another, *ver.* 20. And, with moſt indulgent patience *gives a ſpace of Repentance, ver.* 21. and notes it down, if any then *repent not*, as we there alſo find. Did ſecure Sinners conſider this, how he beholds them with *a flame in his Eye*, and the *Key in his hand*, would they dare ſtill to trifle? If they did apprehend how he, *in this poſture*, ſtands over them, in all their vain dalliances, idle impertinencies, bold adventures, inſolent attempts againſt his Laws, and Government, preſumptuous affronts of his high Authority; Yea or but in their drowſie ſlumbrings, their lingering delays, their neglects of offered Grace. Did they conſider what notice he takes how they demean themſelves under every Sermon they hear, in every Prayer wherein they

they are to joyn with others, or which perhaps, for cuſtoms ſake, they put up alone by themſelves. How their hearts are mov'd, or unmov'd by every repeated Call that is given them to turn to God, & get their Peace made by application of their Redeemer's reconciling Blood. In what Agonies would they be! what pangs of trembling would they feel within themſelves, leſt *the Key* ſhould turn, before their great work be done!

4. *Whatſoever ill deſigns by this obſervation he diſcovers, 'tis eaſie to him to prevent.* One turn of *this Key of Death* (beſides the many other ways that are obvious to him) diſappoints them all, *and in that day all their thoughts periſh.* 'Tis not therefore from inadvertency, indifferency, or impotency, but *deep counſel*, that they are

permitted to be driven on ſo far. *He that ſitteth in the Heavens laughs*, and *he knows their day is coming*. He can turn this Key when he will.

5. *His Power as to every ones Death cannot be avoided, or withſtood.* The act of this Key is *definitive*, and ends the buſineſs. No man hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit; nor hath he power in Death, *Eccleſ.* 8.8. 'Tis in vain to ſtruggle, when the Key is turn'd; the *Power of the Keys*, where it is ſupremely lodg'd, is abſolutely deciſive, and their Effect permanent and irrevocable. That Soul therefore for whoſe *Exit* the Key is turned, muſt thereupon then forthwith depart, willing or unwilling, ready or unready.

6. *Souls that go out of this World of ours, on the turn of this Key,*

Key, go not out of being. He that hath this Key of Death, hath alſo the *Key of Hades,* a *Key* and a *Key.* When he uſes the former, to let them *out from this,* he uſes the latter, to give them their *Inlet* into the *other World,* and into the *one* or the *other part* of it; into the *upper,* or the *lower Hades,* as the ſtate of their caſe is, and doth require.

Our buſineſs is not now with *Pagans,* to whom the Oracles of God are unknown: If it were, the beſt and wiſeſt of them who ſo commonly ſpeak of Souls going into *Hades,* never thought of their going *no whither*; nor therefore that they were *nothing.* They had reaſons, then, which they thought cogent, that induced them, tho' unaſſiſted with Divine Revelation, to conclude they ſurviv'd their forſaken bodies. And what elſe could any unbrib'd

underſtanding conclude, or conceive? When we find they have *powers* belonging to them, which we can much more eaſily apprehend capable of being acted, *without help* from the body, than *by it?* We are ſure they can *form thoughts, purpoſes deſires, hopes*; for it is matter of fact, *they do it*; and coherent thoughts, and thoughts ariſing from thoughts *one*, from *another*. Yea & thoughts abſtracted from any thing corporeal, the notions of *right* and *wrong*, of *Vertue* and *Vice*, of *moral good*, and *evil*, with ſome agreeable reſolves, Thoughts quite above the ſphere of matter, ſo as to form a notion of the *Mind*, it ſelf, of a *ſpiritual Being*, as unexceptionable a one as we can form of a body. Yea of an *Original* ſelf ſubſiſtent *Mind* and *Spirit*, the *Former* and *Maker* of all other. Tis much more

appre-

apprehenſible, ſince we certainly know that all this is done, that it is done without any help of the body, than how fleſh, or blood, or bones, or nerves, or brains, or any corporeal thing, *ſhould* contribute to ſuch Methods of thinking, or to any thought at all. And if it can be conceiv'd that a Spirit *can act* without dependence on a body, what ſhould hinder but we may as well conceive it to *ſubſiſt and live* without ſuch dependence? And when we find *this power of thought* belongs to ſomewhat in us that *lives*, ſince the deſerted Carkaſs *thinks* not, how reaſonable is it to ſuppoſe, that as the *body* lives not *of it ſelf*, or life is *not eſſential* to it, for life may be retir'd and gone, and *it* remain, as we ſee it doth, the ſame body ſtill, that *the ſoul* to which the power of thought belongs, lives *of it ſelf*,

not

not *independently* on *the firſt cauſe*, but *eſſentially*, ſo as to receive *life*, and *eſſence* together from that cauſe, or *life included in its eſſence*, ſo as that it ſhall be the ſame thing to it *to be*, and *to live*. And hereupon how obvious is it to apprehend that *the Soul* is ſuch a thing as *can live in the Body*; which when it doth, the *Body lives by it*, a precarious borrowed life; and *that can live out of the Body*, leaving *it*, when it doth ſo, to drop and die.

These Sentiments were ſo reaſonable, as generally to prevail with the more deeply thinking part of Mankind, *Philoſophers* of all ſorts (a few excepted, whoſe Notions were manifeſtly formed by vicious inclination) in the *Pagan World*, where was nothing higher than Reaſon to govern. But we have *life and immortality brought*

to

to light in the Goſpel, and are forewarned by it that theſe will be the meaſures of the final Judgment, to give *eternal life* at laſt *to them who by a patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek honour, glory and immortality*. To the reſt, *indignation, and wrath, &c.* becauſe *there is no reſpect of perſons with God*. As ſuppoſing the diſcovery of *another World*, even by *natural light* (much more by the addition of *ſupernatural*) to be ſo clear, as that the *Rule* of the *Univerſal Judgment*, even *for all*, is moſt righteouſly to be taken *from hence*, and that there is nothing but a *reſolution of living wickedly*, to be oppoſed to it.

2 Tim. 1. 10.

Rom. 2. 7.

v. 8.

v. 11.

It is alſo no ſlight conſideration that a ſuſceptibleneſs of *Religion* ſhould among the Creatures that dwell on Earth be ſo *appropriate*, and *peculiar to Man*, and (ſome rare

rare Instances excepted) as *far diffused*, as *Humane Nature*. So as to induce some very considering Men, of the Antients, as well as Moderns, both *Pagans* and *Christians*, to think *Religion* the more probable *specifying Difference* of Man, than *Reason*. And whence should so common an impression *be*, but from a *cause* as *common?* Or how can we avoid to think that this *signature* upon the Soul of Man, a *capacity of Religion* should be from the *same hand* that *formed the spirit of Man within him*, and that a *Natural Religiousness*, and *Humane Nature* it self, had the *same Author*. But who sees not that *Religion as such*, hath a final reference to a future state? He was no despicable Writer (tho' not a Christian) that positively affirmed, *hope towards God to be essential to Man*;

Philo Judeus, Quòd Deter. potiori insid. soleat.

ὡς τῶν μὲν ἐλπιζόντων ἐπὶ Θεὸν, λογικῆς φύσεως ἡ μεμεραμένων.

Man; and that they that had it not, were not partakers of the Rational Nature.

'Tis ſo much the more a deplorable and monſtrous thing, that ſo many, not only againſt the light of their own Reaſon, but of Divine Revelation, are ſo induſtrious to *unman* themſelves. And having ſo effectually in a great degree done it *really*, and *in practice*, aim to do it in a more compendious way *notionally*, and *in principle* too. And make *uſe* (or *ſhew*) of *Reaſon* to prove themſelves not to be *reaſonable Creatures*: or to diveſt themſelves of the principal *dignity*, and *diſtinction* of the *Rational Nature*. And are incomparably herein more *unnatural* than ſuch as we commonly count *Felons upon themſelves*, who only act againſt their own *bodily life*, but theſe againſt

againſt the much nobler *life of their Soul*; *They* againſt the life of an *individual*; *Theſe* againſt their own *whole ſpecies*, at once. And how deplorable is their caſe, that count it their *intereſt*, to be in no poſſibility of *being happy!* when yet their ſo great dread of a *future ſtate*, as to urge them upon doing the moſt notorious violence to their own faculties to rid themſelves of it, is a very convictive Argument of *its reality*. For their dread ſtill purſues, and ſticks cloſe to them. This ſhews it lies deep *in the nature of things* which they cannot alter. The *terrible Image* is ſtill before their Eyes; and their principal Refuge lies only in diverting, in not attending to it. And they can ſo little truſt to their own Sophiſtical reaſonings againſt it, that when they have done all they can, they

muſt owe what they have of eaſe and quiet in their own Minds, not ſo much to any ſtrength of reaſon they apprehend in their *own thoughts*, as in *not thinking*. A bold jeaſt may ſometimes *provoke others laughter*, when it doth not *extinguiſh their own fear*. A ſuſpicion *a formido oppoſiti* will ſtill remain, a miſgiving, that they cannot nullifie the *great Hades*, pull down the ſpacious Fabrick of Heaven, or undermine the profound Abyſs of Hell by a profane ſcoff. They will in time diſcern the difference between the evanid paſſion of a *ſudden fright*, that takes its riſe from *imagination*, and the *fixed dread* which is founded in the *Reaſon of things*. As one may between a fright in a dream, and the dread of a condemned Criminal, with whom, ſleeping, and waking, the

real

real ſtate of his caſe is ſtill the ſame. Nor are the *things themſelves*, remote, or unconnected, *God's right* to puniſh a reaſonable Creature that hath liv'd in contempt of him, and his *own reaſonable* apprehenſion hereof, or his *Conſcience* both of the *fact* and *deſert*. They anſwer as face to face, as the *ſtamp on the Seal*, and the *impreſſion on the Wax*. They would fain make their *Reaſon* a protection againſt their *fear*, but that cannot ſerve both ways. The *Reaſon of the thing* lies againſt them already, and there cannot be an eternal War between the *Faculty* and the *Object*. One way or other the *latter* will overpower the *former*, and draw it into conſent with it ſelf: Either by letting it ſee there is a juſt true cauſe of fear, or (aſſiſted by Divine Grace) prevail for the change of

of the ſinners courſe. Whereupon that *troubleſome fear*, and *its cauſe*, will both upon the beſt terms ceaſe together: And that what hath been propoſed to conſideration *under this Head*, may be the more effectually conſidered, to this bleſſed purpoſe. I add that,

7. *The Diſcovery of the Inviſible World, and the diſpoſal of affairs there, have a moſt encourageing Aſpect upon this World.* For both the *Diſcovery and the Diſpoſal* are *by our Bleſſed Redeemer*, in whom *Mercy* and *Might* are met in higheſt perfection. How fragrant breathings of *Grace*, how glorious a diſplay of *Power* are there, in what he here ſays, *Fear not! I am the firſt and the laſt; I am he that liveth and was dead, and I am alive for evermore, Amen. And I have the Keys of*

Hades and of Death. He hath opened the Celeſtial *Hades* to *our view*, that it might be alſo open to *our ſafe entrance* and bliſsful inhabitation. *He who was Dead, but Liveth* and had made his victorious triumphant entrance before us, and for us: He who had overcome him *that had the Power of Death*---- Conquer'd the Gigantick Monſter at the Gate, gain'd the Keys, and deſigned herein their deliverance from the *fear of Death, who were thereby Subject to Bondage*, Heb. 2. 14, 15. He who hath *aboliſhed Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light in the Goſpel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. 'Tis he who bids us lift up our Eyes, and behold the Heavens opened, and himſelf ſtanding at the right hand of God. The horrid, *infernal Hades*, he hath diſcovered too, only

only that we might fear and ſhun it. But yet more diſtinctly conſider, why doth he here repreſent himſelf under this Character, *He that liveth and was dead*? But that he might put us in mind of that moſt convictive Argument of *his Love*, his ſubmitting to Die for us. *Greater love hath no Man* ---- And that he might at once, put us out of doubt concerning *his Power*, that he yet ſurvives, and is ſprung up alive out of that Death, victorious over it: How amiable is the repreſentation of *ſuch Power* in conjunction with *ſuch Love!* The ſame perſon having an heart ſo repleniſh't with *Love*, an hand ſo armed with *Power*, neither capable of *unkind deſign*, or unable to effect the *moſt kind*. Behold him in this repreſentation! who would not now fall

at his foot and adore! Who would hesitate at resigning to him, or be appalled at his disclosure of this unknown World!

Do but consider him who makes the Discovery, and who would not expect from him the utmost efforts of Love and Goodness? *From him* who is the *Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person*! His *Essential Image* who is *Love!* From *him* who came into this wretched World of ours *full of Grace and Truth*! And who could not have come but by the inducement of *Compassion* to our Miseries. *From him who knows all things*, and whose Eye penetrates into every recess of the *vast Hades*: All his own Empire, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: But who only knows not to deceive: Who hath

hath told us, *in his Fathers Houſe are many Manſions, and if it were not ſo, would have told us* that, *Joh.* 14. 2. *From him* into whoſe mouth *guile never entred*, but into whoſe *Lips Grace was poured*, and is poured out by them; ſo that the Ear that hath heard him hath born him witneſs, and filled *with wonder* thoſe that heard the *Gracious words which came out of his Mouth.* Who hath told us *all* concerning that unſeen world, that in this our preſent ſtate it was fit for us to know; and *enough*, in telling all that will be his followers, that *where he is, there he will have them be*, Joh. 17. 24.

And *conſider the manifeſt tendency of the Diſcovery it ſelf.* What doth it mean or tend to, but to undeceive miſerable mortals, whom he beholds from his *high Throne* mock'd with ſhadows,

beguiled with moſt deluſive impoſtures, and eaſily apt to be impoſed upon? *Fooliſh, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures*; feeding upon aſhes, and wearying themſelves for very vanity; ſporting themſelves in the duſt of this minute ſpot of Earth; waſting their little inch of time, wherein they ſhould prepare for tranſlation into the Regions of unſeen Glory. To theſe he declares he hath formed a Kingdom for all that covet to mend their ſtates, and that *his Kingdom is not of this World*; that for ſuch as will be of this Kingdom, he will provide better, having *other Worlds*, the many Heavens above all which he is aſcended, at his diſpoſe, *Epheſ.* 4. 10. But they muſt ſeek *this Kingdom* and the Righteouſneſs of it *in the firſt place*; and deſiſt from their care about

about other things. He Counſels and Warns them not to lay up their Treaſure on Earth-- but in Heaven, and to let their hearts be there with their treaſure. And what can withſtand his power who having been dead *liveth* victorious over him that had the power of Death; and *is alive for evermore* poſſeſt of an Eternal ſtate of Life.

And *have we not reaſon to expect the moſt equal and moſt benign diſpoſal of things in that unſeen World*: *When* he alſo declares *I have the Keys*, *Rightful Authority*, as well as Mighty Power, to reward and puniſh? None but who have a very *ill mind* can fear *from him* an *ill management*. He firſt became capable of dying, and then yielded himſelf to die, that he might obtain *theſe Keys* for gracious purpoſes. He had

them before to execute juſt vengeance, *as* he was originally in *the form of God*, and without *robbery equal with God*; an equal ſharer in ſuſtaining the wrong that had been done by Apoſtate Rebels, and an equal ſharer in the *right* of vindicating it.

But that he might have *theſe Keys* to open the *Heavenly Hades* to reduc'd Apoſtates, to Penitent Believing, Self-devoting Sinners, *for this* it was neceſſary, he ſhould *put on Man, be found here in faſhion as a Man*, take on him *the form of a Servant, become obedient to Death* (even that ſervile puniſhment) *the Death of the Croſs*, Phil. 2. 7, 8. *For this* he is highly exalted into *this Power*, that every Knee might bow to him, ---- in hope of Saving Mercy, *ver.* 9, 10. compared with, *Iſa* 45. 22, 23. He *had the Keys* without this,

of

of the *Supernal Hades* to *ſhut out* all offenders, and of the *infernal* to *ſhut them up* for ever. But that he might have them to abſolve repenting believers, and admit them into Heaven, and only to *ſhut up* in Hell implacable Enemies. *For this* he muſt Die, and live again. *He was to be ſlain and hanged on a Tree*, that he might be a *Prince and a Saviour to give Repentance and Remiſſion of Sin*, Act. 5. 30, 31. That to *this intent* he might be *Lord of the Dead and the Living*, he muſt both *Die and Riſe, and Live ſo as to Die no more*, Rom. 14. 9. *Theſe Keys* for *this purpoſe*, he was only to have upon *theſe terms*. He had a *right to puniſh as an offended God*, but to *Pardon* and *Save*, as a Mediating Sin expiating *God-Man*

But

But as he was to do the part of a *Mediator*, he muſt act equally between the diſagreeing Parties: He was to deal impartially on both ſides. To render back *entire* to the injur'd Ruler of the World his violated Rights, and to obtain for us his forfeited favour, *as entire*. And undertook therefore when as a Sacrifice he was to *be ſlain, to redeem us to God by his Blood*, Rev. 5. 9. To give him back his revolted Creature, Holy, Pure, Subject and Serviceable, as by his methods, he ſhall be at laſt; and procure for him Pardon, Acceptance and Eternal Bleſſedneſs.

When therefore he was to do for us the part of a *Redeemer*, he was to Redeem us from the *Curſe of the Law*, not from the *Command* of it; to ſave us from the *Wrath* of God, not from *his Government*. Had it been otherwiſe

Gal. 3. 13, 14. Rom. 8. 3, 4.

wiſe, ſo firm and indiſſoluble is the connection between *our Duty* and *our Felicity*, that the Sovereign Ruler had been *eternally injured*, and *We not advantaged*. Were we to have been ſet free from the *preceptive obligation* of God's Holy Law, than moſt of all from that moſt *fundamental* precept, *Thou ſhalt Love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, Soul, Might and Mind*. Had this been Redemption? Which ſuppoſes only what is *Evil and Hurtful*, as that we are to be Redeemed from. This were a Strange ſort of Self-repugnant Redemption, not from *Sin and Miſery*, but from our *Duty and Felicity*. This were ſo to be Redeemed as to be *ſtill Loſt*, and every way loſt, both to God, and to our ſelves for ever. Redeemed from loving God! What a mon-

monſtrous Thought! Redeemed from what is the great *Active* and *Fruitive* Principle. The ſource of *Obedience* and *Bleſſedneſs*. The Eternal Spring, even in the Heavenly State, of Adoration and Fruition. This had been to legitimate everlaſting Enmity and Rebellion *againſt the Bleſſed God*, and to Redeem us into an eternal Hell of horrour and miſery *to our ſelves*! This had been to cut off from the Supream Ruler of the World for ever; ſo conſiderable a Limb of his moſt rightful Dominion, and to leave us as miſerable, as everlaſting ſeparation from the fountain of life and bleſſedneſs could make us.

When therefore our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was to Redeem us from the *Curſe of the Law*, it was that the *Promiſed Spirit* might be given

ven to us, *Gal.* 3. 13, 14. who ſhould *write the Law in our Hearts*, *Jer.* 31. 33. *Ezek.* 36. 27. *Fulfil the Righteouſneſs of it in us*, by cauſing us to walk after his dictates, according to that Law, regenerating us, begetting us after Gods Image, and making us partakers of a Godlike nature: So we *through the Law become Dead* to the malediction and curſe of it, *that we may Live to God* more devoted Lives than ever, *Gal.* 2. 19. Thus is Gods loſt creature given back *to him* with the greateſt advantage alſo *to it ſelf.*

With this deſign it is apparent our Lord Redeemed us, and by his Redemption acquired *theſe Keys.* Nor are we to doubt, but *in the uſe of them*, he will diſpenſe exactly according to this *juſt* and *merciful* deſign. And what

what a perverſe diſtorted Mind is *that*, which can ſo much as wiſh it ſhould be otherwiſe? *viz.* That he ſhould ſave us to the Eternal wrong of him that made us, and ſo as that we ſhould be nothing the better, *i. e.* that he ſhould *ſave* us without *ſaving* us?

And hath this no pleaſant comfortable aſpect upon a loſt World? that he who hath theſe Keys, will uſe them for ſuch purpoſes, *i. e.* to admit to eternal bliſs, *and ſave to the uttermoſt all that will come to God by him* not willing to be everlaſtingly alienated from the life of God, *becauſe he ever lives to make interceſſion*, or to tranſact and negotiate *for them*, (as that word ſignifies) and that in a rightful way, and even by the power of *theſe Keys*!

8. *That*

8. *That there muſt be ſome important Reaſon why the other World is to us unſeen, and ſo truly bears the Name of* Hades. This expreſſes the ſtate of the caſe as *in fact* it is, tha it is a World lying out of our ſight, and into which our dim and weak Eye cannot penetrate: That other ſtate of things is ſpoken of therefore as hidden from us by *a vail.* When our Lord Jeſus is ſaid to have *paſſed into the Heavens*, Heb. 4. 14. *he is alſo ſaid to have entered into that within the vail*, Heb. 16. 19, 20. alluding to that in the Temple of *Solomon*, and before that, in *Moſes's* Tabernacle; but expreſly ſignifying that the *Holy places into which Chriſt entred, not thoſe made with hands, which were the Figure of the true, but Heaven it ſelf, filled with the glorious preſence of God, where he appears*

pears for us, Heb. 9. 24. is alſo vailed from us. As alſo the *Glory* of the *other State* is ſaid to be a Glory as yet *to be revealed*, Rom. 8. 18. And we are told, *Job* 26. 9. The great God *holdeth back the face of his Throne*, and above, *ver.* 6. 'tis repreſented as a *Divine Prerogative*, that *Sheol* which is there groundleſly rendred *Hell*) the vaſt *Hades*, is only *naked before him*, lies entirely open to his view, and therein the dark and horrid part of it *Deſtruction* (by which peculiarly muſt be meant *Hell*) is *to him without a covering*, not more hidden from his Eye.

Which ſhews this to be the Divine pleaſure; ſo God will have it be, who could have expos'd all to common view, if he had pleaſed.

But

But becauſe he orders all things *according to the Counſel of his will*, Epheſ. 1. 11. we muſt conceive ſome weighty reaſon did induce hereto, that whatſoever lies beyond this preſent ſtate of things ſhould be concealed from our *immediate* view, and ſo come *uno nomine*, to be all called *Hades*. And if the reaſon of Gods conduct, and the courſe of his diſpenſation herein had been equally hidden, as that State it ſelf is, it had been a bold preſumption to enquire and prie into it; modeſty and reverence ſhould have reſtrained us. But when we find it holds a manifeſt agreement with other parts of his Counſel, that are ſufficiently revealed; and that the excellency of the Divine Wiſdom is moſt conſpicuous and principally to be beheld and admired, in ordering

the apt congruities and correſpondencies of things with each other, and eſpecially of the ends he propoſes to himſelf, with the Methods and Ways he takes to effect them; 'twere very great oſcitancy, and an undutiful negligence not to obſerve them, when they ſtand in view, that we may render him his due acknowledgments, and honour thereupon.

'Tis manifeſt that as God did not create Man, *at firſt*, in that which he deſigned to be his *final State*, but *as a Probationer*, in a *State of Trial*, in order to a *further State*: So when he Apoſtatized and fell from God, he was graciouſly pleaſed to order for him a *New Tryal*, and put him into the hands of *his merciful Redeemer*, who is intruſted with *theſe Keys*, and with the Power

Power of Life and Death over him, to be managed and exerciſed according to the terms plainly ſet down and declared in His Goſpel. Whereſoever he is with ſufficient evidence revealed and made known, Men immediately come under obligation to believe in him, to intruſt and commit themſelves into the ſame hands; to rely upon the truth of his Word, in every thing he *reveals*, as the ground of their ſubmitting to his Authority in every thing *he requires*. What concerns their *preſent practice*, he hath plainly ſhewn them, ſo much as it was requiſite they ſhould preapprehend of *future Retributions*, Rewards and Puniſhments he hath revealed alſo; not that they ſhould have the knowledge hereof by immediate inſpection, but by *taking his word*. That as

their firſt Tranſgreſſion was founded in *Infidelity*; that they did not *believe God*, but a lying Spirit againſt him; their *firſt ſtep* in their Recovery, and return to God, ſhould be to believe him, and take his word about things they have themſelves no immediate ſight or knowledge of. *This point* was by no means to be quitted to the *firſt Apoſtates*. As if Gods ſaying to them, if you Tranſgreſs, *you ſhall Die*, or go into *Hades*, was no ſufficient inforcement of the Precept, unleſs he had given them a diſtinct view of the *States* of felicity, or miſery, which their Obedience, or Diſobedience would lead them into. This had been to give away the whole cauſe to the revolted Rebels. and rather to conteſs errour and overſight in the *Divine Government*, than impute

pute fault to the impugners of it!

This being the State of the Caſe, How ſuitable had it been to the deſign of this *Second Trial* to be made with Men, to *withdraw the vail*, and let every ones own Eyes be their informers of all the Glories of the Heavenly State! and hereupon proclaim and preach the Goſpel to them, that they ſhould all partake herein, that would entirely deny themſelves, come off from their own bottom, give themſelves up abſolutely to the Intereſt, Love, Service and Communion of their Redeemer, and of God in him? To fortifie them againſt the aſſaults and dangers of their Earthly Pilgrimage by reverſing that *Rule, The Juſt ſhall live by Faith*; even that *Faith which is the Subſtance of the things hoped for, and* Heb. 10. 38. c. 12. 1.

the Evidence of things not seen; or by inverting the method, that in reference to such things, *We* 2 Cor. 5. 7. *are to walk by Faith, not by Sight*, and letting it be. *We are to walk by Sight, not by Faith!* And that lest any should refuse such Compliance with their Great Lord, *Whole Hades*, should be no longer *so*, but *made naked before them*, and the *covering of Hell and Destruction* be taken off, and their own Eyes behold the infernal horrors, & their own Ears hear the shrieks and howlings of accursed Creatures, that having rejected their Redeemer, are rejected by him. We are not here to consider, what course would most certainly effect their Salvation, but what most became the Wise Holy God, to preserve the Dignity of his own Government, and save them too, otherwise Almighty

ty Power could ſave all at once. As therefore we have cauſe to acknowledge *the kindneſs and compaſſion* of our Bleſſed Lord, *who hath theſe Keys*, in giving us *for the kind, ſuch* notices as he hath, of the ſtate of the things in *Hades*. So we have equal cauſe to admire his Wiſdom, that he gives us not thoſe of *another kind*, that ſhould more powerfully ſtrike ſenſe and *amaze* us more, but *inſtruct* us leſs That continues it to be *Hades* ſtill, a ſtate of things to us unſeen as yet. As the caſe would have been on the other ſuppoſition, the moſt generous noble part of our Religion had been ſullied or loſt; & *the Tryal of our Faith --- which is to be found unto Praiſe, Honour and Glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*, even upon this account, *that they who had not ſeen him* in

his mean circumſtances on Earth, nor did **now** *ſee him*, amidſt all the Glories of his exalted State, *yet* **believing**, *lov'd him, and rejoyced* in him *with joy unſpeakable, and* full of Glory, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8. *This Faith*, and all the glorious tryals of it, with its admirable atchievements, and performances, whereby the Elders heretofore *obtained ſo good a Report*, and high renown on Earth, and which filled the World with wonder, had all vaniſhed into obſcurity and Darkneſs, *i. e.* If they had believed no more, or no greater things, than every Man beſides, had the immediate view of by his own Eye-ſight.

Heb. 11. 2.

And yet the trial had been greater, *on another Account*, than the *Divine Wiſdom* in conjunction with *Goodneſs*, and *Compaſſion*, thought fit ordinarily to put [ſincere

cere Chriſtians upon. For who could with any tolerable patience have endured longer abode on Earth, after they ſhould once have had the glory of the Heavenly ſtate *immediately* ſet in view before their Eyes! eſpecially conſidering, not ſo much the *Sufferings*, as the *impurities* of their preſent State! What for great reaſon was a ſpecial vouchſafement to one Apoſtle was for as great to be common to all Chriſtians. How great is the Wiſdom and Mercy of our Bleſſed Lord in this *partial* conceal-ment of our future State, and that while ſo much as is ſufficient is revealed, there is yet an *Hades* upon it, and it may ſtill be ſaid, *It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be*, 1 Joh. 3. 2.

But as theſe *Majeſtick Life-breathing* words of our *Great Lord*,

Lord, do plainly offer the things that have been mentioned (and many more such that might occur) to our *Thoughts* and *Meditation*; so will they be *thought on* in vain, if they be not followed and answered by *suitable Dispositions*, and *Actions* of Heart and Life. Therefore the *further use* we are to make of this *great Subject* will be to lay down

2. Divers *correspondent things to be practised and done*, which must also suppose dispositions and frames of Heart and Spirit agreeable thereto.

1. *Let us Live expecting a period to be ere long put to our Life on Earth* For remember, there are *Keys* put into a *great hand* for this very purpose, that holds them not in vain. His *Power* is of equal extent with the *Law* he is to proceed by. And by *that*

it

it is *appointed for all once to Die.* Heb. 9. 28.
Therefore as *in the Execution,* he *cannot exceed,* ſo he *will not come ſhort of this appointment*: When *that once* ſhall be, it belongs to him to determine. And from the courſe we may obſerve him to hold, as it is *uncertain* to all, it can be very *remote* to none. How ſhort is the meaſure of a Span! 'Tis an abſurd vanity to promiſe *our ſelves* that which is in the power of *another.* How Wiſe and Prudent a thing to accommodate our ſelves compoſedly to his *pleaſure*, in *whoſe power* we are! And *to live* as Men continually expecting *to die!* There are *bands of Death* out of which, when they once take hold, we cannot free our ſelves. But there are alſo *bands of Life,* not leſs troubleſome or dangerous.

'Tis

'Tis our great concern to be daily by degrees, looſening and diſentangling our ſelves from *theſe bands*; and for preventing the neceſſity of a violent Rupture, To be daily diſingaging our Hearts from an enſnaring World, and the too cloſe embraces of an over indulged Body. Tell them reſolutely, *I muſt leave them*, whenſoever my great Lord turns the Key for me, and I know not how ſoon that may be. It is equally *unhappy and fooliſh* to be ingaged in the purſuit of an impoſſibility; or in a War with *neceſſity*, the former whereof cannot be obtained, the latter cannot but overcome. We owe ſo much to our ſelves, and to the eaſe and quiet of our own Minds, to be reconciled, *at all times*, to that which may befal us *at any time*. How confounding

a

a thing is ſurprizal by that which our ſelves regret and dread! How unaccountable and ignominious muſt it be to pretend to be ſurprized with what we have ſo great reaſon always to expect! And whereof we are ſo oft forewarned! Is it no part of Chriſtian watchfulneſs to wait for ſuch an hour? Tho' that *waiting all the days of our appointed time*, mentioned *John* 14. 14 refers to *another change* than *that of Death*, viz. (as the foregoing and following verſes ſhew) *That of the Reſurrection*, yet it cannot but be equally requiſite, upon a no leſs important reaſon. And the requeſts, *that the Lord would make us know our end, and the meaſure of our Days that we may know how frail we are*, Pſal. 39. 4. And *that he would teach us ſo to number our Days that we may apply our hearts*

to wiſdom, Pſal 90. 12. are equally monitory to the ſame purpoſe, as the moſt expreſs Precepts: As alſo the many Directions we have to watch and wait for *our Lords appearance* and coming are as applicable to this purpoſe. For whenſoever his *Key* opens our paſſage out of *this World*, and *Theſe Bodies*, *Hades* opens too, and he *particularly appears to us*, in as deciſive a judgment of our caſe, as his *univerſal appearance* and judgment will at laſt give for all. The *placid agreement* of our Minds and Spirits with Divine determination, both as to the *thing*, and *time*, of our departure hence, will prevent the trouble and ungratefulneſs of being ſurpriz'd; and our *continual expectation* of it, will prevent any *ſurprizal* at all. Let this then be an agreed reſolution with us,

to

to endeavour being in ſuch a poſture, as that we may be capable of ſaying, ‘ Lord whenſo-
“ ever thou ſhalt move thy *Key*,
“ and tell me *this night*, or this
“ hour, *I'll require thy Soul*, thou
“ ſhalt not, O Lord, prevent mine
“ expectation, or ever find me
“ counting upon *many years* injoy-
“ ment of any thing this world
“ can entertain me with.

In further purſuance hereof,

2. *Be not over-intent on deſigns for this preſent World*; which would *ſuppoſe* you to count upon long abode in it. Let them be always laid with a ſuppoſition, you may *this way*, even, by one turn of *this Key*, be prevented of bringing them about; and let them be purſued with indifferency, ſo as that diſappointment even *this way*, may not be a grievance.

vance. A thing made up of thought and design, as our Mind and Spirit naturally is, will be designing one way or other; nor ought we to attempt that violence upon our own Natures, as to endeavour the stupifying of the intelligent, designing Mind, which the Author of Nature hath put into us. Only let us so lay our designs, as that how many soever we form, that may be liable to this sort of disappointment; we may still have *one* greater and more important, so regularly and surely laid, that no turn of this *Key* shall be in any possibility to frustrate, but promote it rather. The design for *the Kingdom of God to be first sought, with his Righteousness*, Mat. 6. 33. or which is pursued *by seeking Glory, Honour, and Immortality, to the actual attainment of*

of Eternal Life, Rom. 2. 7. may, if preſcribed methods be duly obſerved, have *this felicity* always attending it, to be *ſucceſsfully purſued*, while we live, and *effected* when we Die,

But this is an unaccountable vanity *under the Sun*, that Men too generally form ſuch projects that they are diſappointed both *when they do not compaſs* them, and *when they do*. If they *do not*, they have loſt their labour, if *they do* they are not worth it. *They dream they are Eating*, and injoying the fruit of their labour, but *they awake, and their Soul is empty*. And if at length they think of laying wiſer and more valuable deſigns, the *Key* turns, and not having fixed their reſolution, and begun aright, they and *all their thoughts* (fooliſh or more wiſe) *periſh* together. *Becauſe* there is a *fit*

ſeaſon for every *fit undertaking*, a *time, and judgment for every purpoſe*, or a critical time, ſuch as is *by Judgment* affixt to every ſuch purpoſe, *Eccleſ.* 8. 6. and becauſe alſo Men *know not their time*, c. 9. 12. *therefore their Miſery is great upon the Earth*, and as Birds caught in a ſnare, *they are ſnared in an evil time that falleth ſuddenly upon them.* O miſerable, miſerable Mortals! So are your immortal Spirits miſimployed and loſt!

Their moſt valuable deſign for another World is ſeldom thought on in ſeaſon, their little deſigns for this World they contrive and proſecute with that confidence, as if they thought the World to be theirs, and themſelves their own, and they *had no Lord over them.* This rude inſolence that holy Apoſtle animadverts upon, of ſuch as ſay, *To Day or to Morrow we will*

will goe to ſuch a City, and conti- Jam. 4.13, 14, 15.
nue there a year, and Buy and Sell, and get Gain, whereas they know not what ſhall be on the morrow. And What is their Life? a Vapour, &c. So much of Duty, and becoming Behaviour is in the mean time forgotten, as to ſay, *If the Lord will we ſhall live,* &c. This is to bear themſelves as abſolute Maſters of their own Lives. How bold an affront to their Soveraign Lord? They feel themſelves well in Health, Strength, and Vigour, and ſeem reſolved it ſhall be a Trial of Skill who hath the Power, or to whom the *Keys* belong, till it come to the laſt irrefragable demonſtration, that he *changes their Countenance and ſends them away,* Joh. 14.20. and then they go driven, *pluckt,* and torn *away from their dwelling-*

place rooted out of the Land of the living, Pſal. 2. 55.

But if any premonitory decays make them doubt the perpetuity of their own abode here, they ſome what eaſe their minds by the pleaſure they take in thinking, when they have filled *their own Bellies*, Pſal. 17. 14. What they ſhall *leave of their ſubſtance to their Babes*, and to them that ſhall come after. *And their inward thought is, that their Houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their Dwelling places to all Generations; and they call their Lands after their own Names, and their Poſterity approve their ſayings*, think and act as wiſely as they, *Pſal* 49. 11, 12. --- Thus they take upon them, and reckon *they* for their time, and *theirs* after them ſhall ſtill *dwell in their own*. A wiſe thought!

They

They are the *Owners* when *another* keeps the Keys.

Several other things of like import, I ſhall more lightly touch, that may be collected from what hath been already more largely ſaid, and leave to be further enlarged upon, in your own thoughts, and ſhall dilate more upon *ſome other*, as they are either more material, or leſs thought on by the moſt.

3. *Be not prodigal of your time on Earth, which is ſo little in your Power.* Becauſe you are not to expect *much*, make the beſt uſe you can of your *little*. 'Tis ſo precious a thing that it is to be *redeemed*, 'tis therefore too precious to be *embezelled* and trifled away. The connexion of thoſe *two precepts*, Epheſ. 5. 15, 16. of *walking circumſpectly not as Fools, but as Wiſe*, and

 that

that of *Redeeming the time* more than intimates, that to ſquander time is a *fooliſh thing*. Of the ſeveral ſorts of things that *we make our ſelves*, their *ſhape* and *frame*, ſhews their *uſe* and *end*. Are we to make a leſs judicious eſtimate of the Works of God? If we therefore contemplate our ſelves, and conſider what a ſort of Production Man is, Can we allow our ſelves to think God made him a *reaſonable* Creature on purpoſe to *play the Fool?* Or can we live as if we thought ſo, without *reproaching our Maker?* But whereas *he* who hath been the *Author to us of ſuch a Nature*, capable of improving a lifes time in this World unto moſt valuable purpoſes, hath alſo been the *Author of ſuch a Law*, requiring us to *redeem time*. The reproach will be wholly turned off from him

him upon our ſelves, and our conſequent ruine be upon our own guilty Heads. And he will find ſome among our ſelves, who by the advantage only of the *reaſonable Nature*, common to us and them; that are inſtructors to us, not to waſte our days in vanity, and will be witneſſes againſt us if we ſo fooliſhly *conſume*, what we cannot *command*.

Some ſuch have unanſwerably reprehended the common folly of thoſe that dread the thought *of throwing away their whole Life at once, that yet have no regret at throwing it all away by parcels and piece-meal.* And have told us a wiſe Man *can find nothing of that value, for which to barter away his time* *.

* *Neq; quicquam reperit dignum, quod cum tempore ſuo permutaret* Sen.

And we are to conſider, that as we are *reaſonable* Creatures we are *accountable*. That we are

ſhut up in theſe Bodies, as in *Work houſes.* That when he that *keeps the Keys* lets us out, we are to *receive the things done in the Body, according to what we have done, whether good or evil,* .... 2 Cor. 5. 10. That it belongs to him that *meaſures* our time to *Cenſure* it too, and the uſe we have made of it.

4. *Let him be at once both* great *and* amiable *in our Eyes, who hath ſo abſolute power over us, and ſo gracious propenſions towards us,* i. e. *Who hath theſe Keys,* and who *acquired them* with *ſo merciful* intentions, even *upon ſuch terms* as could not but ſignifie the greateſt compaſſion and good will towards ſuch as we.

Reconſider, what hath been offered as matter of Meditation, to both theſe purpoſes. And now, hereupon, let us endea-

vour

vour to have a *correſpondent ſenſe, inwrought into our Hearts*, and to bear our ſelves towards him accordingly. The *power* and *efficacy* of *whole Chriſtianity depends upon this*, and doth very principally *conſiſt* in it. What a faint, impotent, languiſhing thing is our Religion, how doth it dwindle into ſpritleſs, dead form without it? Either the *form of knowledge* is nothing elſe but inſipid *dead notion*; and our *forms of Worſhip*, only *fruitleſs unpleaſant formality*, if we have not a vivid ſenſe in our Hearts both of his *glorious greatneſs*, and of his *excellent loving kindneſs*. As much as words can ſignifie towards the impreſſing ſuch a ſenſe into our Hearts, we have in *theſe words*, uttered from his own Mouth, ſo that he may ſay as that memorable type of him once did, you may

may plainly perceive, *it is my Mouth that ſpeaketh to you. I am the firſt and the laſt.* I am he *that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.* And hereto he now ſets his ſolemn ratifying Seal, *Amen.* Wherewith he leaves us to pauſe, and collect, that thus it was brought about, that he could add, and *I have the Keys of the* vaſt *Hades, the whole unſeen World, and of Death.*

Gen. 45.

And God forbid that, now, theſe words ſhould be with us an *empty ſound*, or *a dead Letter*! *Let us caſt in our minds what manner of Salutation this ſhould be!* Doth the Son of God thus vouchſafe to beſpeak miſerable abjects, periſhing, loſt wretches! How can we hereupon but bow our Heads and Worſhip! What agitations of affection ſhould we feel within! How ſhould all our

inter-

internal Powers be moved! and our whole Souls made as the Chariots of *Amminadib.* What can we now be *unwilling* of, that he would have us be, or do? And as that, whereof we may be aſſured, he is moſt willing.

5. *Let us entirely receive him, and abſolutely reſign our ſelves to him, as our Prince and Saviour.* Who would not covet to *be in ſpecial Relation to ſo mighty,* and *ſo kind* a Lord! And can you think to be related to him, upon *other terms*? And do you not know that upon *theſe*, you may? when in his Goſpel he *offers himſelf,* and *demands you.* What can that mean but that you are to *receive him,* and *reſign your ſelves*? The caſe is now brought to this ſtate, that you muſt either comply, or rebel. And what? Rebel againſt him who hath theſe *Keys,* who

who is in ſo high Authority over the whole unſeen World! Who is the head of all *Principality and Power*, who is gone into the Heavens, the *glorious upper Hades*, and *is at the right hand of God, Angels, Authorities, Powers being made Subject to him*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. We little know or can conceive as yet, the ſeveral *orders* and *diſtinctions of the Celeſtial Inhabitants*, and their great and illuſtrious Princes and Potentates, *Thrones*, *Dominions*, &c. that all pay him a dutiful and a joyful ſubjection and obedience. But do we not know *God hath given him a Name above every Name? and that in his Name* (or *at it*, as it may be read, *i. e.* in acknowledgment of his Sovereign Power, *every knee muſt bow, of things in Heaven, on Earth and under Earth, and all confeſs that*

he

he is Lord to the Praiſe and Glory of God the Father? And who art thou, periſhing wretch! that dar'ſt diſpute his Title? or that when all the Creation muſt be ſubject to him, wilt except thy ſelf?

And when it coſt him ſo dear, that his vaſt power might be ſubſervient to a *deſign of Grace*, and thou muſt at laſt be ſaved by him, or loſt for ever. What can tempt thee to ſtand out againſt *ſuch Power*, and *ſuch Grace*?

If thou wert to gratifie thy ambition, how glorious a thing is it to be a Chriſtian! a Subject, a Devoted Homager to ſo *mighty a Prince*! If to provide againſt thy neceſſity, and diſtreſs, what courſe can be ſo ſure and ſucceſsful, as to fly for refuge to ſo *Compaſſionate a Saviour*! And doſt thou not know there muſt be

be to this purpoſe, an *expreſs tranſaction* between him and thee? Wonder he will condeſcend to it! To capitulate with Duſt and Aſhes! To Article with his own Creature, with whom he may do what he will! But his merciful condeſcenſion herein is declared and known. If there ſhall be a *ſpecial Relation* ſettled betwen him and thee, he hath told thee in what way it muſt be, *i. e.* by way of *Covenant-tranſaction, and agreement*, as he puts his People of old in mind, his way was with them; *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine*, Ezek. 16. 8. This I inſiſt upon and preſs, as a thing of the greateſt importance imaginable, and the leaſt thought of: Nor the ſtrange incongruity animadverted on, *viz.* That we have the ſeals of ſuch a Covenant among

mong us, but the Covenant it ſelf ſlips through our hands. Our Baptiſm ſoon after we were born, with ſome fœderal words then, is thought enough, as if we were a **Nation** of **always Minors**. Who ever therefore thou art, that heareſt theſe words, or readeſt theſe Lines; know that the Great Lord is *expreſs* towards thee in his Goſpel propoſal. *Wilt thou accept me for thine, and reſign thy ſelf as mine?* He now expects and requires thy *expreſs* Anſwer. Take his Goſpel as from *the Croſs*, or take it as from *the Throne*, or as from both, 'tis the ſame Goſpel interwoven of *Grace* and *Authority*, the *richeſt* Grace, and the *higheſt* Authority at once *inviting* and *requiring* thee to *commit* and *ſubmit* thy ſelf unto him. Take heed leſt his *Key* turn before thou have given thy complying anſwer

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importing at once both thy *Truſt* and thy *Subjection.*

Give not over pleading with thy ſelf, with thy wayward ſtupid heart, till it can ſay to him, " *Lord, I yield, thou haſt overcome.* Till with tender relentings thou haſt thrown thy ſelf at his feet,& told him, " Lord, I am aſhamed, " I am confounded within my " ſelf,that thou ſhouldſt Die upon " a Croſs to *obtain thy high Power,* " and that thou art now ready *to* " *uſe it* for the ſaving ſo vile a " miſcreant as I! That when " thou haſt ſo vaſt an unknown " World, ſo numberleſs myri- " ads of excellent Creatures in " thy obedience, thou ſhouldſt " yet think it worth thy while to " look after me ! and that I ſhould " ſo long have withſtood thy " kind and gracious overtures and " intendments! O forgive my

" wick-

" wicked averſion! I now *accept* " and *reſign.*

And now this being ſincerely done, with fulneſs of conſent, with deep humility, with yearning bowels, with unfeigned thankfulneſs, and an inward complacency, and gladneſs of Heart.

6. Let your following courſe in this World be ordered agreeably hereto, in continued dependence, and ſubjection. As we have *received* Chriſt Jeſus, the Lord, ſo we are *to walk in him*, Col. 2.6. Take him according to the Titles here given him, as *Chriſt* --, a Perſon anointed, authorized, qualified to be both, *Jeſus*, a Saviour, ſo we are to walk (according to our firſt reception of him,) *in continual dependence* on his *Saving Mercy*, and and to be a *Lord*, or as 'tis here expreſt with eminency, *the Lord*, ſo we are to walk in *continual ſubjecti-*

jection to his *Governing Power*. Otherwiſe our receiving him, at firſt, under theſe notions, hath nothing in it but mockery and colluſion.

But if his obtaining theſe *Keys*, upon the terms here expreſt, *as having been dead, and now living*, and having overcome Death (as 'tis alſo *Rom.* 14. 9.) did ſignifie his having them for ſaving purpoſes, as it muſt, ſince for other purpoſes, he had them ſufficiently before; and if we reckon'd this a reaſonable inducement to receive him, and *commit and intruſt* our ſelves to him *as a Saviour*, that *he dy'd*, and *overcame Death*? for *his Grace* in yielding to Die, had not rendred him a competent object of truſt, otherwiſe than in conjunction with *his Power* in *overcoming Death*, and ſo gaining into his hands *theſe Keys*:

Keys: Then, *the ſame reaſon ſtill remaining*, how conſtant an encouragement have we to continue accordingly walking in him all our days! How potent an argument ſhould it be to us, *to live that life which we live in the Fleſh, by Faith in the Son of God who loved us, and gave himſelf for us*? Gal. 2. 20. *i. e.* inaſmuch, as having been crucify'd with him (which is alſo there expreſt) we feel *our ſelves to live nevertheleſs*; yet ſo as that 'tis not ſo much *we that live, as Chriſt that liveth in us*; who could not *live in us*, or be *to us* a ſpring of Life, if he were not a perpetual ſpring of Life, *in himſelf*.

And conſider, how dareſt thou live otherwiſe in *this Fleſh*, in this *Earthly Houſe*, whereof he keeps the Keys, and can fetch thee out at his pleaſure? When

he hath warned thee *to abide in him, that when he ſhall appear, thou mayeſt have confidence, and not be aſhamed at his coming*, 1 Joh. 2. 28. He will certainly *then appear*, when he comes to open the Door, and diſlodge thee from *this fleſh* (though there be *here* a further, and final reference to *another appearance*, and *coming* of his) and if he then find thee ſevered, and disjoyned from him (thy firſt cloſure with him, not having been ſincere, truly unitive and vital) how *terribly* will he look! how *confoundedly* wilt thou look in that hour!

Neither haſt thou leſs reaſon to live in continual *ſubjection* to him, conſidering that as he dy'd, and overcame Death that he might have *theſe Keys*, ſo he *now hath them*, and thou art under his governing Power. The more

thou

thou *conſider'ſt* his right to Govern, the leſs thou wilt *diſpute* it. When he was ſpoken of as *a Child to us born*, that he might become a *Man of ſorrows*, & be *ſorrowful unto the Death*, and have all the *ſorrows of Death come upon him*, he is at the ſame time ſaid to be the *mighty God*, & it was declared the *Government ſhould be upon his Shoulders*. Iſa. 9. 6. As he was the *firſt begotten from the Dead*, viz. both *ſubmitting* to Death, and *conquering* it; ſo he was the *Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, (a ſmall part of his Kingdom too) his *Throne* being founded on his *Croſs*, his *Governing Power*, in his *Sacrifice*, i. e. The *Power* whereby he ſo *governs*, as that he may alſo *ſave*; making theſe two things the *ſalving the Rights of the Godhead*, injured by Sin, and the *delivering of the Sinner* from an Eternal ruine, to

agree, and consist with one another.

What an endearing obligation is this to obey! *That he will be the Author of Eternal Salvation to them that obey him*! Inasmuch as, while our obedience cannot merit the least thing *from him*, yet his vouchsafing to govern us doth most highly merit *from us*. For he Governs *by writing his Law in the heart*, which makes our heart agree with the Law, and by implanting Divine Love in us, which vanquishes enmity and disaffection, and vertually contains in its self *our obedience, or keeping his Commandments*, Joh. 14. 15. and 23. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. Therefore this Government of his, over us, is *naturally necessary* to our Salvation and blessedness, and is the *inchoation* and *beginning* of it; as our *perfected Love to God*, and *conformity*

mity to his Nature, and *will*, do involve and contain in themſelves our *compleat and perfect bleſſedneſs*, with which a continued enmity, or a rebellious, mutinous diſpoſition againſt God, is *naturally inconſiſtent*; and would be *to us*, and *in us*, a perpetual, everlaſting *Hell*.

There can therefore be no *inthralling ſervitude* in ſuch *obedience*, but the trueſt liberty, *that* by which *the Son makes us free indeed*, Joh. 8. 36. Yea a true ſort of *royalty*: For hereby we come in the moſt allowable ſenſe, *to live as we will, our will being conformed to the will of God*. Whereupon that was no high extravagant rant, but a ſober expreſſion, *We are born in a Kingdom, to ſerve God is to reign*. *Sen.*

And we know this to be the will of God, *that all ſhould honour*

Joh. 5. 23. *the Son, as they honour the Father.* Herewith will the *Evangelically Obedient* comport with high complacency; accounting him moſt highly worthy that it ſhould be ſo. Wherein therefore the *Chriſtian Law* ſeems ſtricteſt, and moſt rigorous in the enjoyned obſervance of *our Lord Chriſt*, herein we ſhall diſcern an unexceptionable reaſonableneſs, and comply with a complacential approbation. And let us put our own hearts to it, and ſee that without regret, or obmurmuration they can readily conſent to the equity of the precept.

'Tis enjoyned us (conſtructively at leaſt) that becauſe *Chriſt Dy'd for us, when we were Dead*, quite loſt in Death, *we that live* hereupon, ſhould ſettle this which our ſelves as a *fixed judgment*, and upon that intervening judgment, yield

yield to the *conſtraint of his Love*, ſo as *henceforth* no *more to live to our ſelves*, q. d. God forbid we ſhould *henceforth* be ſo profane! we muſt now for ever have done with that impious, unlawful way of living. What? after this! that we have ſo fully underſtood the ſtate of our caſe, that we ſhould be ſo aſſuming, as ever, again to offer at ſuch a thing, as living to our ſelves, to make our ſelves Deities to our ſelves: *Or to live* otherwiſe *than unto him who Dyed for us and Roſe again*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. This is high and great, and may ſeem ſtrict and ſevere. What? to have the whole ſtream of all the actions, and aims, the ſtrength and vigour of our Lives, to be carried in one entire undivided current unto him, and (as it muſt be underſtood, *Gal.* 2. 19.) to God

in

in him, ſo as *never more* to live to our ſelves, a divided, ſeparate life apart from him! or wherein we ſhall not finally, and more principally deſign for him! How high is his claim! but how equal and grateful to a *right mind*! with what a plenitude of conſent is every Divine Command, (taking this into the Account) *eſteemed to be right in all things*! So as that whatſoever is oppoſite is *hated as a falſe way*, Pſal. 119. 128. And as the precept carries its own viſible *reaſon*, the *keeping of it* carries its own *reward* in it ſelf, *Pſal* 19. 11. And is it too much for him who *bears theſe Keys*, and obtained them on ſuch terms, and for ſuch ends, to be thus affected towards him!

We are required, without exception, without limitation or reſerve, *whatſoever we do*, whether

ther *in word or work*, to do all in *the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Col. 3. 17.

Enquire we, Do our Hearts repine at *this Law*? Do not we? Doth not this World owe ſo much to *him*? Why are we allowed a *place* and a *time here*? Why is not this World a flaming Theatre? Is it not fit every one ſhould know under whoſe Government they live? by whoſe Beneficence, under whoſe Protection, and in whoſe name they may act ſo, or ſo, and by whoſe Authority? Either *obliging*, or *not reſtraining* them, *requiring*, or *licenſing* them to do this or that? Doth this World owe leſs to him, that *bears theſe Keys*, than *Egypt* did to *Joſeph*, when thus the *Royal word* went forth in reference to him? *I am* Pharaoh, and *without thee ſhall no Man lift up his hand*

hand or foot in all the Land of Egypt? How pleaſant ſhould it be to our Souls, often to *remember and think on that Name* of his which we bear, *Iſa.* 26. 8. *Mal.* 3. 18. and draw in as vital breath, the *ſweet odours* of it, *Cant.* 1. 3. How glorious a thing ſhould we count it, becauſe he is *the Lord our God, to walk in his Name for ever and ever, as all People will walk every one in the Name of their God*, Mic. 4. 5. And then we ſhall account it no *hard Law, whatever we do, to do all in the Name of our Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God the Father by him*, and *for him*; bleſſing God every Day, that we are put by him, under the mild and merciful Government of a Redeemer. Then, we ſhall rejoicyingly avow, as the Apoſtle doth, 1 *Cor.* 9. 21. *That*

Pſal. 45. 6 —11. Joh. 20. 28.

we

we are not without Law to God, but under Law to Chriſt.

VVhereupon, when you find your *ſpecial Relation* is thus ſettled and fixed, unto the *great Lord* both of this *preſent viſible World*, and of *Hades*, *or the inviſible World*, alſo, by your Solemn Covenant with him, *and evidenc't* by the *continued correſpondency* of *your heart and Life*, your *Diſpoſitions* and *actions* thereunto.

7. *Do not regret or dread to paſs out of the one World into the other at his call, and under his conduct, though through the dark paſſage of Death*; remembring *the Keys*, are in ſo great and ſo kind a hand. And that his good pleaſure herein is no more to be *diſtruſted*, than to be *diſputed* or *withſtood*. Let it be enough to you, that what you cannot ſee your ſelf, he ſees for you. You have oft de-

ſired

ſired your ways, your motions, your removals from place to place, might be directed by him in the VVorld. Have you never ſaid if thou go not with me, carry me not hence? How *ſafely and fearleſly* may you follow him blindfold or in the dark any whither! not only from place to place, *in this World*, but from world to world! how lightſome ſoever the one, and gloomy and dark the other may ſeem to you. *Darkneſs and light are to him alike.* To him *Hades is no Hades*, nor is the dark way that leads into it to him an untrodden path. Shrink not at the thoughts of this *tranſlation*, though it be not by *eſcaping* Death, but even through the *jaws of it.*

VVe commonly excuſe our averſion *to Die*, by alledging that *Nature regrets it.* But we do not enough

enough conſider that in ſuch a compounded ſort of creature as we are; the word *Nature* muſt be ambiguous. There is in us a *ſenſitive Nature* that regrets it; but taking the caſe as it is now ſtated, can we think it tolerable, that it ſhould be regretted by the *reaſonable Nature*? unto which, if we appeal, can we ſuppoſe it ſo untrue to its ſelf, as not to aſſert its own *Superiority*? or to judge it fit that an intelligent, immortal Spirit, capable of ſo great things, in *another World*, ſhould be content with a long abode here. Only to keep a *well-figured piece of Fleſh* from putrifying, or give it the ſatisfaction of taſting meats, and drinks, that are grateful to it, for a few years! And if for a few, why not for many? and when thoſe many were expired, why not for as many more? And the

the *ſame reaſon always remaining*, why not for alwaies? The caſe is thus put, becauſe the common meaning of *this allegation*, that *Nature regrets* or *abhors* this diſſolution; is not that they are concerned for their Souls how it may fare with them in *another World*, which the moſt little mind or trouble themſelves about; but that they are to have what is grateful to them *in this World*. And was this the end a *reaſonable Spirit*, was made for, when, without *reaſon*, *ſenſe* were alike capable of the ſame ſort of gratifications? WVhat Law, what Equity? what rule of Decency can oblige the *Soul* of a Man, capable of the Society, and Enjoyments of Angels, to this piece of Self-denial, for the ſake of his incomparably *baſer Body*? Or can make it fit that the *nobler and*

more

more excellent Nature, ſhould be eternally ſubſervient to the *meaner*, and *more ignoble*? Eſpecially, conſidering that if (according to the caſe ſuppoſed) the two laſt foregoing directions be complyed with, there is a ſort of *Divine Nature* ſuperadded to the *whole Humane Nature*, that cannot but prompt the Soul *ennobled* by it, to aſpire to *ſuitable*, even to *the higheſt*, *operations* and *enjoyments*, whereof it is capable, and, which are not attainable in this preſent bodily ſtate.

And if there were ſtill a diſpute between *Nature* and *Nature*, its enough that the *great Lord* of *Hades*, and of this preſent *ſenſible World* too, will determine it. In a far lower inſtance, *when* the *General* of an *Army* commands it upon an enterprize, wherein life is to be hazarded, it would be

an ill excuſe of a cowardly declining, to ſay, *their Nature* regrets and dreads the adventure. The thing is neceſſary. Againſt what is ſo unavoidable as Death, that is an abject mind that reluctates. *

* *Miſer eſt quicunq; non vult, Mundo ſecum morivente, mori* Sen. Tr.

Come, then, let us imbolden our ſelves, and when he brings *the Key, dare to die.* It is to *obey*, and *enjoy* him who is our life, and our all. Say we chearfully each of us, *Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit, into thy hands I commit it who haſt Redeemed it.*

8. *Let us quietly ſubmit to Divine Diſpoſal, when our dear Friends and Relatives are by Death taken away from us.* For conſider into what hands this affair is put, of ordering every ones deceaſe, and removal out of *this* into *the other World*, and who hath theſe *Keys*. 'Tis ſuch a one, *whoſe right*, if we uſe

uſe our thoughts, we will not allow our ſelves to *diſpute*, or to *cenſure his adminiſtration*. His *Original Right*, is that of a *Creator* and a *God*. *For all things were Created for him*, and *by him*, Col. 1. 16. *And without him was nothing made that was made*, Joh. 1. 2. *The Firſt and the Laſt* to all things, *v.* 17.

His *ſupervening Right*, was that of a *Redeemer*, as hath been already noted from this context, and, *as ſuch*, he had it by *acquiſition*, dying to obtain it, & overcoming Death! I am he that *liveth* and *was dead*. And then, as he elſewhere declares, *by conſtitution*, *All Power is* **given** *me both in Heaven and on Earth*, Mat. 28. 19. The word (ἐξουσία) imports rightful Power. And who are we? or any Relatives of ours? whom *all the Power of Heaven and Earth* hath no right to touch? What *ex-*

empt juriſdiction, can we pretend our ſelves to belong unto?

Or will we adventure to ſay, not denying his right, he did not uſe it well *in this caſe*? who is more *fitly qualifyed* to Judge, than *he that hath theſe Keys*? And let this matter be yet more throughly diſcuſs't. What is it that we find fault with in the removal of this or that perſon, that was near, and delightful to us? Is it that he was to Die at all? or that he Dy'd ſo ſoon? If we ſay the former; Do we blame the *conſtitution*, appointing all Men once to Die, by which *this World* is made a portal to *another*, for *all Men*, and whence it was neceſſary none ſhould ſtay long *in this*, but only paſs thorough, into *that World* wherein every one is to have is everlaſting abode? Or is it that, when we think it not unfit

this

this ſhould be the *general and common courſe*, there ſhould yet have been a particular diſpenſation for *this Friend or Relation of mine*?

Let the former be ſuppoſed the thing we quarrel at, and conſider the *intolerable conſequences* of the matters *being otherwiſe*; as the caſe is with this Apoſtate Sinful World. Such as upon ſecond, better-weighed thoughts, we would abhor to admit into our minds, even as the matter of a wiſh. What would we wiſh to Mankind a *ſinning immortality on this Earth*, before which a wiſe *Heathen* profeſt to *prefer one Day vertuouſly ſpent*? Would we *wiſh* this World to be the everlaſting Stage, of indignities and affronts to him that made it? Would we *wiſh* there ſhould never be a *judgment Day*? and that all the wiſe & righteous Councels of Heaven *Cicer.*

ſhould be ranverſt & overturned, only to comport with our terrene & ſenſual inclinations? Is this our dutifulneſs and loyal affection to our Bleſſed Lord, the Author of our Beings, and the God of our Lives, whoſe rights and honours ſhould be infinitely dearer to us than our ſelves? Is it our kindneſs to *our ſelves*, and all others of our kind and order, that are all naturally *capable*, and many, by gracious vouchſafement, *fitly qualified*, to enjoy a perfect felicity in another World, that we would have all together confined for ever, to this Region of darkneſs, impurity and miſery?

Or if it diſpleaſe us, that *our Relatives* are not, by *ſome ſpecial diſpenſation*, excepted from the common Law of Mortality? we would, ſurely, as much have expected an exemption our *ſelves*; other-

otherwiſe *our dying away from them*, would make the ſo much regretted ſeparation, as well as *theirs from us*. And what then, if we were required to draw up *our petition*? to put it into expreſs words? to turn our wiſh for our *ſelves*, and *all our Relatives* and *peculiar Friends*, into a *formed, ſolemn prayer*, to this effect, *that we are content the Law ſtand in force, that all the World ſhould Die, with only the exception of ſome few Names*, viz. *our own, and of our Kindred, and more inward Friends*. What aſhamed confounded creatures ſhould we be upon the view of our own requeſt! Would we not preſently be for quelling, and ſuppreſſing it, & eaſily yield to be nonſuited, without more ado? What pretence can we have not to think others as apt to make the ſame requeſt for them, and theirs? And

if all the reſt of the World ſhall Die, would we and our Friends dwell here alone! or would we have this World be continued habitable only on this *private account*, to gratifie a *Family!* And if we, & our Friends be holy, heavenly minded perſons, how kind were it to wiſh to our ſelves, and them, when fit for the Society of Angels and Bleſſed Spirits above, a perpetual abode in this low Earthly State! VVould we not now, upon *riper*, *ſecond thoughts*, rather be content that things ſhould reſt as they are; and he that hath *theſe Keys*, uſe them *his own way.*

But if by all this, we are put quite out of conceit, with the deſire of a *terreſtrial immortality*, All that the matter finally reſults into is, that we think *ſuch a Relative of our's Dyed too ſoon.* VVe would

would not have coveted for him *an Eternity* on Earth, but only *more time.* And *how much more?* or *for what?* If we were to *ſet the time*, 'tis like that when it comes, we ſhould be as averſe to a ſeparation, if coexiſtent, *then*, as *now*, and ſo we revolve into the exploded deſire, of a terreſtrial immortality, back again at laſt. If we were to aſſign the reaſon of our deſire, that would ſeem as in the preſent caſe, a plauſible one to ſome, which is mentioned by *Plutarch* in his conſolation to *Apollonius* for the loſs of his Son, concerning another ſuch caſe (as he inſtances in many) of one *Elyſius* an *Italian*, whoſe loſs of his Son *Euthynous*, was much aggravated by this, that *he was a great Heir.* But what was ſaid to that, *there*, and what is further to be ſaid to any thing of

that

that kind, I ſhall reſerve to a more proper place.

It is a more weighty Allegation, and of more common concernment; *When an uſeful perſon is gone*, and one very capable of becoming *very eminently ſo*. And this requires deeper conſideration, and ſundry things ought to be conſidered in order to the quieting their minds, who are apt to behold ſuch darker diſpenſations, in the courſe of Providence, with amuſement, and diſturbance of Spirit, *i. e.* When they ſee perſons of excellent endowments, and external advantages, beyond the moſt, cut off in their Prime, while the World is cumbred with Drones, never likely to do good, and peſtered with ſuch, as are like to prove plagues to it, and do great hurt and miſchief to the Age wherein they live. An ancient

ancient and not uncommon ſcruple to pious obſervers heretofore. *Wherefore* (ſays Holy *Job*) *do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power? Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight* ----- *Ch.* 21. 7, 8. *When his Seed was cut off before his Eyes.* And here let us conſider,

1. That this World is in Apoſtacy from God: And though he is pleaſed to uſe apt means for its recovery, he doth what he thinks fit herein, of *meer grace, and favour*, and is under no obligation to do all that he can. His diſpenſation herein muſt correſpond to, and bear upon it the impreſs of other Divine perfections, his *Wiſdom*, *Holineſs*, *Juſtice* as well as *Grace*. And for *Grace it ſelf*, whereas all ſince the Apoſtacy lie together in a fearful gulf of impurity, and miſery, and

and ſome, made more early ſenſible hereof than the moſt, do ſtretch out *a craving hand* and cry for help. If now a *merciful hand* reacht down from Heaven take hold of *them*, and pluck them ſooner out; Is this diſagreeable to *the God of all Grace*, to make ſome ſuch inſtances, and vouchſafe them an earlier deliverance; tho' they might, being longer delayed, be ſome way helpful to others, that continue ſtupid, and inſenſible?

2. When he hath done much, in an Age, ſtill obſtinately unreclaimable, he may be ſuppoſed to let *one* appear, only with a *promiſing aſpect*, and *in juſt* diſpleaſure, preſently withdraw him, that they may underſtand they have forfeited ſuch a bleſſing, to this or that Country, *as ſuch* a one might have proved.

3. This

3. This may awaken ſome, the more to prize, and improve, the encouragements they may have from ſuch as remain; or ſhall ſpring up in their ſtead, who are gone, and to bleſs God that the weight of his intereſt, and of the cauſe of Religion, doth not hang and depend upon the ſlender thred of this Mans Life. *The God of the Spirits of all Fleſh*, can raiſe up inſtruments as he pleaſes; and will, to ſerve his own purpoſes, though not ours.

4. He will have it known that tho' he *uſes* inſtruments, he *needs* them not. 'Tis a piece of Divine Royalty and Magnificence, that when he hath prepared, & poliſh'd, ſuch an *utenſile*, ſo as to be capable of great ſervice, he can lay it by, without loſs.

5. They that are moſt qualified to be of greateſt uſe in this World,

World, are thereby alſo the more capable of bleſſedneſs in the other. 'Tis owing to his moſt munificent bounty, that he may vouchſafe to reward *ſincere intentions*, as highly as *great ſervices*. He took *David's having it in his Heart* to build him an Houſe, as kindly as *Solomon's building him one*. And as much magnifies himſelf in teſtifying his acceptance of ſuch as he diſcharges from his Service *here*, at the *third hour*, as of them whom he engages not in it, till the *eleventh*.

6. *Of their early Piety he makes great preſent uſe* in this World, teſtifying his acceptance of their works, generally in his word, and *particularly* by the reputation he procures to them in the minds and conſciences, of ſuch as were beſt able to judge, and even of all

all that knew them; which may be truly accounted a *Divine teſtimony*, both in reſpect of the *object*, which hath on it a *Divine impreſs*, and ſpeaks the *ſelf recommending power* of true goodneſs, which *is the Image of God*, and in reſpect of the *ſubject*, ſhews the Dominion God hath *over minds*, engaging not only *good Men* to behold with complacency of ſuch pleaſant, blooming goodneſs, correſpondent to their own; but even *bad Men* to approve in *theſe others*, what they entertain not in themſelves. *The ſame things are accepted with God, and approved of Men*, Rom. 14. 18. *Thus being Dead, they, as* Abel, *yet ſpeak.* Heb. 11. 4.

7. And it is a brighter, and more unſullied teſtimony, which is left in the minds of Men, concerning ſuch very hopeful perſons

as Die in their Youth. They never were otherwiſe known, or can be remembred, *than as excellent Young Perſons.* This is the only *Idea* which remains of them. Had they lived longer to the uſual Age of Man, the remembrance of what they were in youth, would have been in a great degree effac'd, and worn out, by latter things; perhaps blackened, not by what were *leſs commendable*, but *more ungrateful* to the greater part, eſpecially, if they liv'd to come into publick Stations. Their juſt zeal, and conteſtations againſt the wickedneſs of the Age, might diſoblige many, and create them Enemies, who would make it their buſineſs to blaſt them, and caſt upon their name and memory all the reproach they could invent. Whereas the luſtre of that Vertue and Piety which had provok't

vok't no body, appears only, *with an amiable look*, and leaves behind *nothing*, of such a person, but a *fair*, *unblemisht*, *alluring* and *instructive* Example; which, they that observed them, might, *with less prejudic'd minds* compare with the useless, vicious, Lives of many that they see to have filled up a room in the World, unto extream old age, either to *no purpose*, or to *very bad*. And how vast is the difference in respect of usefulness to the world, between a *pious*, *young Gentleman*, dying in his youth, that lived long in a little time, untainted by youthful Lusts, and Vanities, and Victorious over them; and an *accurst Sinner of an hundred years old*, Isa. 65. 20. One that was an Infant of days, and though an hundred years old, yet still a Child, that had not filled up his days with any thing of

real value, or profit to himſelf, or others, (as ſome very judicious Expoſitors underſtand *that Text*) that (as he aptly ſpeaks) had nothing beſides *Grey Hairs, and Wrinkles*, to make him be thought a long liver; but who might truly be ſaid not to have *liv'd long*, but only to have *been long* in the World. How *ſweet* and *fragrant a Memory*, doth *the one*, how *rotten and ſtinking* a *name*, doth *the other*, leave behind him to ſurvivors!

Non eſt quòd quenquam propter canas aut rugas, putet diu vixiſſe. Non ille diu vixit, ſed diu fuit. Sen.

Therefore ſuch very valuable young Perſons as are taken hence in the flower of their Age, are not to be thought, upon that account of *uſefulneſs to this World*, to have lived in it, that ſhorter time, in vain.

They leave behind them *that teſtimony*, which will turn to account; both *for the Glory of Gods grace*,

grace, which he hath exemplified in them, and which may be improved to the *good of many* who ſhall have ſeen that an *Holy Life*, amidſt the temptations that the youthful Age is expoſed to, is no impracticable thing; and that an *Early Death*, is as poſſible alſo to *themſelves*.

But beſides their no little uſefulneſs in *this World*, which they leave, we muſt know,

8. *That the Affairs and Concernments of the other World, whither they go, are incomparably greater every way, and much more conſiderable.* And to *this moſt unqueſtionable maxim* muſt be our laſt and final reſort, in the preſent Caſe. All the perturbation, and diſcompoſure of mind, which we ſuffer *upon any ſuch occaſion*, ariſes chiefly, from our having too high and great

thoughts of *this World*, and too low, and diminiſhing thoughts of *the other*; and the evil muſt be remedy'd by rectifying our apprehenſions in *this matter*. Becauſe *that other World* is *Hades*, unſeen, and not within the verge of our ſenſe, our *ſenſual minds* are prone to make of it *a very little thing*; and even *next to nothing*, as too many, will have it to be *quite nothing* at all. We are concerned, in duty to our bleſſed Redeemer and Lord, and for his juſt honour, to magnifie this his *Preſecture*, and render it as great to our ſelves as the matter requires, and as our very narrow minds can admit. And ſhould labour to correct it as a great and too common fault, a very groſs *vulgar Error*, to conceive of perſons leaving this world of ours, as if they hereby became

became *uſeleſs*; and, upon the matter, loſt out of the Creation of God. So is our fancy prepoſſeſt, and filled with deluſive Images, that throng in upon it thorough our unwary ſenſes, that we imagine this little ſpot of our Earth to be the only *place of buſineſs*, and all the reſt of the Creation, to be *meer vacuity*, vaſt, empty ſpace, where there is *nothing to do*, and *nothing to be enjoyed*. Not that theſe are formed, poſitive thoughts, or a ſettled judgment, with *good Men*, but they are floating imaginations, ſo continually obtruded upon them, from (what lies next) the objects of ſenſe, that they have more influence to affect the Heart, and infer ſuitable, ſudden, and indeliberate, emotions of Spirit than the moſt *formed judgment*, grounded on things that

lie without the ſphere of ſenſe can outweigh.

And hence when a good man Dies (elder or younger) the common cry is *among the better ſort* (for the other do leſs concern themſelves) *O what a loſs is this*! Not to be repaired! not to be born! Indeed this is better than the common ſtupidity, not to conſider, not *to take it to Heart, when the Righteous Man periſheth, or is taken away.* And the Law of our own Nature, obliges and prompts us, to feel, and regret, the loſſes which afflict us. But ſuch reſentments ought to be followed, and qualified, by greater thoughts, ariſing from a ſuperiour Nature, that ought preſently to take place with us, of the *nobler employments* which God calls ſuch unto, *of whom this World was not worthy,* Heb.

Heb. 11. 38. And how highly his great and all comprehending intereſt, is to be preferr'd before *our own*, or the intereſt of this or that *Family*, *Country*, or *Nation*, on Earth!

And, at once, both to *enlarge* and quiet our *minds*, on ſuch occaſions we ſhould particularly conſider,

1. *The vaſt amplitude of the Heavenly Hades*, in compariſon of our minute ſpot of Earth, or of that dark Region (whereſoever it is) reſerved for the juſt puniſhment of dilinquents, according to ſuch intimations as the *Holy Scriptures* give us hereof, which being writ *only* for the uſe *of us on Earth*, cannot be ſuppoſed to intend the giving us more diſtinct accounts of the ſtate of things, in the upper World, than were neceſſary for us, in this our *preſent ſtate*.

But it is no obſcure hint that is given of the ſpaciouſneſs of the Heavenly Regions, when purpoſely to repreſent the *Divine immenſity*, 'tis ſaid of the *unconfined preſence* of the *great God*, that even *Heaven*, and the *Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him*, 1 King. 8. 27. 2 Chron. 6. 18. How vaſt ſcope is given to our *thinking minds* to conceive Heavens, above Heavens, incircling one another, till we have quite tired *our faculty*, and yet we know not how far ſhort we are of the utmoſt verge! And when our Lord is ſaid to have aſcended far *above all Heavens*, Epheſ. 4. 10. Whoſe *Arithmetick* will ſuffice to tell how many they are? whoſe *Uranography* to deſcribe how far that is?

We need not impoſe it upon our ſelves to judge their rules infallible,

fallible, who, being of no mean underſtanding, nor indiligent in their enquiries, have thought it not improbable that there may be fixed Stars within view, at that diſtance from our Earth, that a movable, in as ſwift motion, as that of a *Bullet* ſhot from a *Canon*, would be fifty thouſand years in paſſing from the *one* to the *other* *. But how much remoter *that Star* may be from the utmoſt verge of the Univerſe, is left altogether unimaginable. I have been told that a very ingenious Artiſt going about, in exact proportions, to deſcribe the *Orb* or *Vortex* to which our *Sun* belongs, on as large a Table as could be convenient for him to work upon, was at a loſs to find a ſpot not too big, in proportion, for our Earth, and big enough, whereupon to place the point, made very

* Computation by the Honourable *Francis Roberts*, Eſq; Philoſoph. Tranſactions for the Months *March* and *April*, 1694.

very fine, of one foot of his Compaſs.

If any ſuſpect extravagancy in our Modern Computations let him take a view of what is diſcourſed to this purpoſe by a *Writer* of moſt unexceptionable wiſdom, and ſobriety (as well as moſt eminent ſanctity) in his time *

* *Bolton* in his *four laſt things*, who ſpeaking of Heaven, directs us to gueſs the immeaſurable magnitude of it: (as otherwiſe ——ſo) By the incredible diſtance from the Earth to the Starry Firmament; and adds, If I ſhould here tell you the ſeveral computations of *Aſtronomers*, in this kind, the ſumms would ſeem to exceed all poſſibility of belief. [And he annexes in his Margin ſundry computations which I ſhall not *here* recite, you may find them in the Author himſelf, *p.* 21.] And yet beſides, (as he further adds) the late learneſt of them place above the 8th ſphere, wherein all thoſe glorious Lamps ſhine ſo bright, *three moving Orbs* more. Now the *Empyreum* Heaven comprehends all theſe; How incomprehenſible then, muſt its compaſs and greatneſs neceſſarily be! But he ſuppoſes it poſſible, the adventure of Mathematicians may be too audacious and peremptory, *&c.* And concludes the height and extent of the Heavens to be beyond all Human inveſtigation.

Now

Now when the Lord of this vaſt univerſe beheld upon this little ſpot, intelligent creatures in *tranſgreſſion* and *miſery*, that he did ſo compaſſionately concern himſelf, for the recovery of ſuch as ſhould, by apt methods, be induc't to comply with his merciful deſign; and appoint his *own Eternal Son* to be their *Redeemer*, in order whereto, as he was *God with God*, he muſt alſo become *Man, among Men, one of themſelves*, and ſo as God-Man, *for his kindneſs to ſome, be conſtituted* univerſal Lord of all. Shall meer pity towards *this World* greaten it above the other?

But we are not left without ground to apprehend a more *immediate Reaſon* for his being, *as Redeemer*, made Head and Lord of all thoſe Creatures that were the Original Inhabitants of the *Inviſi-*

Invisible World. For when it had been said, *Col.* 1. 16. That *all things* were created by him, not only the *visible things on Earth*, but the *invisible things in Heaven*, here is a regression to *these latter*, who were before (for their greater dignity) *generally*, *first* mentioned, and now some enumeration given of them, *whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers*, and *all things* again repeated, that *these* might appear expressly included, said over again *to be created by him, and for him*, which was sufficient to express his *creative Right* in them. 'Tis presently subjoyned, *v.* 17. And he is before *all things, and by him all things consist.* All owe their stability to him, *viz.* The mentioned Thrones, Dominions, *&c.* as well as other things. But how?

or

or upon what terms? That we might underſtand his *Redemptory right* was not here to be overlook't; 'tis ſhortly after added, and *having made Peace by the Blood of his Croſs, it pleaſed the Father* (to be repeated out of what went before) *by him to reconcile all things to himſelf*; and this *by him*, iterated, *q. d.* by him ſhedding his Blood on the Croſs, *whether they be things on Earth, or things in Heaven*, leſt the *Thrones*, *Dominions*, mentioned before ſhould be forgot. And a word is uſed accommodable enough to the ſeveral purpoſes before expreſſed, ἀποκαταλλάξαι, which doth not always ſuppoſe enmity, but more generally ſignifie, upon a ſort of commutation, or valuable conſideration, to *procure* or *conciliate*, or make a thing *more firmly* ones own, or aſſure it

to

to himſelf, though 'tis afterwards uſed in the ſtricter ſenſe, *v.* 21.

I have often conſidered with wonder and pleaſure, that whereas God is called by that higher, and far more extenſive Name, *the Father of Spirits*; He is alſo pleaſed ſo graciouſly to vouchſafe, as to be ſtyl'd *the God of the Spirits of* all Flesh, and thereby to ſignifie, that having an order of Spirits ſo meanly lodged that inhabit frail and mortal Fleſh, though he have a world of Spirits to converſe with, *whoſe dwelling is not with Fleſh*; yet he diſdains not a Relation to ſo mean and abject Spirits (*his Off-ſpring alſo*) in our World. And that, becauſe this was the place of offending delinquents that he would recover; the *Redeemer* ſhould ſort *himſelf* with them, and, as they were *partakers*

kers of Fleſh and Blood, himſelf likewiſe take part of the ſame! This was great, and Godlike! and ſpeaks the largeneſs, and amplitude of an all comprehending mind, commonto *Father* and *Son*; and capable of, ſo, applying it ſelf to the *greateſt things*, as not to neglect the *leaſt*.

And therefore ſo much the more magnifies *God*, and our *Redeemer*, by how much the leſs conſiderable *we*, and *our World* are. But that hence we ſhould ſo over magnifie this World, as if nothing were conſiderable that lies without its compaſs, is moſt perverſly to miſconſtrue the moſt amazing condeſcenſion.

The Spirit of God, by Holy *David*, teaches us to reaſon the quite contrary way. And from the conſideration he had of the vaſtneſs, and ſplendor, of the upper

upper World, *of the Heavens, the Moon and Stars*, &c. not to *magnifie but diminiſh our World of Mankind*, and ſay, *What is Man?*

And let us further conſider,

2. *The inexpreſſible numerouſneſs of the other Worlds Inhabitants, with the excellencies wherein they ſhine, and the orders they are ranked into, and how unlikely is it, that Holy Souls that go thither, ſhould want employment?* Great concourſe, and Multitudes of People, make places of buſineſs *in this World*, and muſt much more do ſo, where creatures of the moſt Spiritual, and active Natures, muſt be ſuppoſed to have their reſidence. Scripture ſpeaks of *Myriads* (which we read *an innumerable company*) of *Angels*, beſides *all the Spirits of Juſt Men Heb.* 12. Who are ſometimes ſaid to be more than

any

any one, (which we cauſleſly render *Man*) could number, *Rev.* 7. And when we are told of many *Heavens*, *above all which our Lord Jeſus is ſaid to have aſcended*; are all thoſe Heavens, only empty ſolitudes? uninhabited glorious deſerts! When we find how full of vitality this baſe Earth of ours is, how repleniſh't with living creatures, not only on the ſurface, but within it, how unreaſonable is it to ſuppoſe the nobler parts of the univerſe to be leſs Peopled with Inhabitants, of proportionable ſpirituality, activity, livelineſs and vigour to the ſeveral Regions, which, the remoter they are from dull Earth, muſt be ſuppoſed ſtill the finer, and apt to afford fit, and ſuitable habitations to ſuch Creatures? Whether we ſuppoſe pure, unclothed Spiritsbe to the *Natives* in

all thoſe Heavens, all comprehended under the *one Name* of *Angels*, or whether (as ſome think of all Created Spirits) that they have all vital union with ſome or other vehicles, *Ethereal*, or *Celeſtial*, more or leſs fine, and pure, as the Region is, to which they belong, having gradually aſſociated unto them the Spirits of Holy Men gone from us, which are ſaid to be ἰσάγγελοι, Angels-fellows, *Luk.* 20. 36. it is indifferent to our purpoſe.

Let us only conſider them all, as intelligent, Spiritual, Beings, full of Holy Light, Life, active Power, and Love to their common Lord, and one another. And can we imagine their ſtate to be a State of torpid ſilence, idleneſs, and inactivity, or that they have not much higher, and nobler work to do *there*, than they can have,

in

in ſuch a World as this, or in ſuch bodies, as *here*, they lugg to and fro!

And the Scriptures are not altogether ſilent, concerning the *diſtinct orders* of thoſe glorious Creatures, that inhabit all the Heavens, with this *upper Hades*, muſt be underſtood to contain. Tho' it hath not provided to gratifie any ones curioſity, ſo far as to give us particular accounts of their differences, and diſtinctions. And though we are not warranted to believe ſuch conjectures concerning them, as we find in in the ſuppoſititious *Dionyſius*' his *Celeſtial Hierarchy*, or much leſs the idler dreams of *Valentinus*, and the *Gnoſticks* about their *Æones*, with divers more ſuch fictions, yet we are not to neglect, what God hath expreſly told us, *viz.* That giving us ſome Account of

the Creation, in the *Hades*, or the inviſible part of it; there are Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Angels, (and elſewhere Archangels, Authorities, *Col.* 1. 16. with 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. which being terms that import Order, and Government, can ſcarce allow us not to conceive, that of all thoſe numberleſs multitudes of glorious Creatures, that repleniſh and people thoſe ſpacious Regions of Light, and Bliſs, there are none, who belong not to ſome or other, of thoſe Principalities and Dominions.

Whence therefore, nothing is more obvious, than to conceive, that whoſoever is adjoyned to them, aſcending out of our World, preſently hath his Station aſſigned him, is made to know his poſt, and how he is to be employed, in the ſervice and adoration

of

of the Sovereign Lord of all, and in paying the moſt *regular* homage, to *the Throne of God and the Lamb.* It being ſtill to be remembred, that God is not worſhiped *there*, or *here*, as an ἀνθρ, or as though he needed any thing, ſince he *gives to all breath and being and all things*, Acts 17. But that the *felicity* of his moſt excellent Creatures, doth in great part conſiſt, in acting perpetually according to the dictate of a juſt & right mind. And that therefor tehey take higheſt pleaſure in proſtration, in caſting down their Crowns, in ſhrinking even into nothing, before the Original, Eternal, Subſiſtent Being, that he may be owned as the *all in all*, becauſe they follow, herein, a moſt ſatiſfy'd judgment, and expreſs it when they ſay, *Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive Glory, and Ho-*

nour and Power, for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created, Rev. 4. 11. *And worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength,* &c. ch. 5. 12.

And they that *reſt not Night or Day* from ſuch high and glorious employments, have they nothing to do? Or will we ſay or think, becauſe we ſee not how the Heavenly Potentates, lead on their bright Legions, to preſent themſelves before the Throne, to tender their obeyſance, or receive commands and diſpatches to this or that far remote *Dynaſty* --; or (ſuppoſe) to ſuch and ſuch a mighty Star (whereof there are ſo numberleſs myriads. And why ſhould we ſuppoſe them not repleniſh't with glorious Inhabitants?) Whither they fly as quick

as

as thought, with joyful ſpeed, under the All-ſeeing Eye, glad to execute wiſe and juſt commands upon all occaſions. But alas! in all this *we can but darken Counſel with words without knowledge.* We cannot pretend to *knowledge* in theſe things; yet if from Scripture intimations, and the concurrent reaſon of things, we only make *ſuppoſitions of what may be*, not *concluſions of what is*; let our thoughts aſcend as much higher as they can. I ſee not why they ſhould fall lower than *all this.* And becauſe we cannot be poſitive,

Will we therefore ſay or think, there can be no ſuch thing, or nothing but dull inactivity in thoſe Regions? Becauſe that *other World* is *Hades*, and we ſee nothing, ſhall we make little, or next to nothing of it? We ſhould think it very abſurd reaſoning (if we

ſhould uſe it, in reference to ſuch mean trifles in compariſon, and ſay) there is no ſuch thing as Pomp and State, no ſuch thing as Action or Buſineſs in the Court of *Spain* or *France*, of *Perſia* or *Japan*, becauſe no ſound *from thence*, ſtrikes our Ear, or the beams of Majeſty *there*, dazle not our Eye?

I ſhould indeed think it very unreaſonable to make *meer magnitude*, or vaſt extent of ſpace, filled up with nothing but void air, Ether, or other fine matter (call it by what name you will) *alone*, or *by it ſelf*, a very conſiderable note of excellency, *of the other inviſible World*, above this *viſible World of ours*. But I reckon it much more unreaſonable and unenforc't, (to ſay no more) by any Principles, either of Philoſophy, or Religion, finding this

World

World of ours (a baſer part of the Creation.) ſo full of Life, and of living Inhabitants, of one degree or another; to ſuppoſe the nobler parts of the Univerſe, ſtill aſcending upwards, generally unpeopled, and deſert! when it is ſo conceivable in it ſelf, and ſo aptly tending to magnifie our Creator, and Redeemer, that all the upper Regions be fully inhabited with intelligent creatures, whether *meer Spirits*, unclothed with any thing material, or united with ſome or other matter, we need not determine.

And whereas Scripture plainly intimates, that the Apoſtate revolted Spirits that fell from God, and kept not their firſt Stations, were vaſtly numerous; we have hence ſcope enough for our thoughts to conceive, that ſo ſpacious Regions being repleniſht with

with intelligent Creatures, always innocent and happy, the delinquents compared with them may be as deſpicable for their paucity, as they are deteſtable for their apoſtacy. And that the *horrid Hades*, wherein they are reſerved to the *blackneſs of Darkneſs for ever*, may be no more in proportion, nay, unexpreſſibly leſs, than ſome little Rocky Iſland, appointed as a place of puniſhment for Criminals, in compariſon of a flouriſhing, vaſt Empire, fully peopled with induſtrious, rich, ſober-minded and unhappy *Inhabitants*.

We might further conſider,

3. The high perfection they preſently attain to, who are removed, though in their younger years, out of *this*, into *that other World*.

The *Spirits of juſt Men* are there ſaid to be *made perfect*.

Waving

Waving the *Olympick Metaphor*, which is, at moſt, but the thing ſignifying: That which is *ſignified*, cannot be leſs than the concurrence of *Natural*, and *Moral Perfection*. The perfecting of all our faculties, *mind*, *will*, and *active power*, and of all holy and gracious excellencies, *knowledge*, *wiſdom*, *love*, *holineſs*. The Apoſtle makes the difference be, as *that of a Child*, and *that of a Man*, 1 Cor. 13. And would any one that hath a Child he delights in, wiſh him to be a Child always, and only capable of *Childiſh things*? Or is it a reaſonable imagination, that by how much we are *more capable of action*, we ſhall be the *more uſeleſs*, and have the leſs to do?

We may further laſtly add, that which is not the leaſt conſiderable.

4. *That*

4. *That all the active Services, and uſefulneſs, we are capable of in* this World, *is but tranſitory, and lies within the compaſs of this temporary State of things, which muſt have an end. Whereas the buſineſs of the* other World, *belongs to our final and eternal State, which ſhall never be at an end.* The moſt extraordinary qualifications for ſervice on Earth, muſt hereafter, if not by the ceſſation of the *active Powers and Principles* themſelves, as *Tongues, Prophecies, and ſuch knowledge* as is uncommon, and, by peculiar vouchſafement, afforded but to a few, for the help of many.

Theſe endowments deſigned for the Propagation of the Chriſtian Faith, and for the ſtopping Mouths of gainſayers, muſt *in the uſe and exerciſe, at leaſt, by the ceſſation of the objects, and occaſions*

caſions, fail, and ceaſe, *and vaniſh away*, 1 Cor. 13. 8. The like may be ſaid of courage and fortitude to contend againſt prevailing wickedneſs; skill, ability, with external advantages, to promote the impugned intereſt of Chriſt, and Chriſtian Religion; of all theſe there will be no further uſe in *that other World*. They are all to be conſidered as *means* to the *end*. But how abſurd were it to reckon the *means* of greater importance than the *end* it ſelf? The whole preſent conſtitution of *Chriſts Kingdom* on Earth, is but preparatory and introductive to the *Celeſtial Kingdom*. And how abſurd were it to prefer this *Temporary* Kingdom to the *Eternal one*, and preſent ſerviceableneſs *to this*, to perpetual ſervice *in the other*?

'Tis

'Tis true, that ſervice to God and our Redeemer in this preſent ſtate, is *neceſſary in its own kind*, highly acceptable *to God*, and juſtly much valued by *good Men*. And we ought our ſelves willingly to ſubmit to ſerve God in a meaner capacity in this World, while it is his pleaſure we ſhall do ſo, eſpecially if God ſhould have given any ſignification of his mind, concerning *our abode in the Fleſh*, ſome longer time, as 'tis likely he had done to the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Phil.* 1. 24. becauſe he ſays, *he was confident, and did know* that ſo it ſhould be, *ver.* 25. we ſhould be abundantly ſatisfied with it, as he was. But to ſuppoſe *an abode here*, to be *ſimply, and univerſally* more eligible, is very groundleſs, and unreaſonable. And were a like caſe, as if a perſon of very extraordinary abilities and accompliſhments

compliſhments, becauſe he was uſeeful in ſome obſcure Country Village, is to be looked upon as loſt, becauſe his Prince, being informed of his great worth, calls him up to his Court, and finding him every way fit, employs him in the greateſt affairs of State!

To ſumm up this matter, whereas the *means*, are always, according to uſual eſtimate, wont to derive their value from their end. *Time*, from *Eternity*. This judgment of the caſe, that *uſefulneſs in this preſent State*, is of greater conſequence, and more important, *than the affairs of the other World*, breaks all meaſures, overturns the whole frame, and inverts the Order of things, makes the *means* more valuable than *the end*: *Time* more conſiderable than *Eternity*; and the concernments of a ſtate

that

that will ſoon be over, greater than thoſe of our fixed, permanent, everlaſting State, that will never be over.

If we would allow our ſelves the liberty of reaſoning, according to the meaſure and compaſs of our narrow minds, byaſt, and contracted by private intereſt, and inclination, we ſhould have the like plauſible things to think, concerning *ſuch of ours as Die in Infancy*, and that when they have but newly look't into this World, are preſently again caught out of it; that if they had lived, what might they have come to? How pleaſant and diverting might their Childhood have been? How hopeful their Youth? How uſeful their Riper Age? But theſe are commonly thoughts little wiſer than *theirs*, and proceed from a general infi-

delity

delity, or misbelief, that whatsoever is not within the compass of this little, sorry, World, is all emptiness, and nullity! Or if such be pious and more considering, 'tis too plain they do not, however, consider enough, how great a part it is, of Divine magnificence, to take a reasonable immortal Spirit from animating a piece of well figured Clay, and presently adjoyn it to the general assembly above! How glorious a a change is made upon their Child in a moment! How much greater a thing it is to be adoring God above, in the Society of Angels, than to be dandled on their knee, or enjoy the best provisions they can make for them on Earth! That they have a part to act upon an Eternal Stage! and though they are but lately come into Being, are never to go

out of being more, but to be everlasting Monuments, and Instruments of the glory of their great Creator and Lord!

Nor, perhaps, is it considered so deeply as it ought, that it hath seemed meet to the Supream Wisdom, upon a most important reason, in the case of lengthning, or shortning the Lives of Men, not ordinarily, or otherwise, than upon a great occasion, to interrupt the tendencies of Natural Causes, But let Nature run its Course: For otherwise, very frequent innovations upon Nature, would make *Miracles* cheap, and common, and consequently, useless to their proper, great ends, which may be of greater significancy in the course of Gods Government over the World, than some addition to this, or that Life can be worth. And there-

therefore ſhould this conſideration repreſs our wonderment, why God doth not, when he ſo eaſily can, by one touch upon this, or that ſecond Cauſe, prevent, or eaſe the grievous pains, which they often ſuffer that love him, and whom he loves. He reckons it fitter, and they will in due time reckon ſo too themſelves, when the wiſe methods of his Government come to be unfolded, and underſtood, that we ſhould any of us bear what is ungrateful to us, in point of pain, loſs of Friends, or other unpleaſing events of providence, than that he ſhould make frequent, and leſs neceſſary breaches upon the common order, and courſe of Government which he hath eſtabliſh't over a delinquent, ſinful, World.

Whereupon it is a great piece of wiſdom and dutifulneſs towards our great Lord, not to pray abſolutely, peremptorily, or otherwiſe than with great ſubmiſſion, and deference to his wiſe and holy pleaſure, for our own or our Friends lives, eaſe, outward proſperity, or any external or temporary good thing. For things that concern our Spiritual and eternal welfare, his good and acceptable will is more expreſly declared, and made known already, and before hand.

But as to the *particular caſe* of the *uſefulneſs* of any Friend or Relative of ours *in this*, or the *other State*, the matter muſt be finally left to the arbitrement and diſpoſe of him who hath *the Keys of Hades*, and of *Death*. And when by his *turn of them* he hath decided the matter, we then know what

what his mind and judgment is, which it is no *more fit* for us to *cenſure*, than *poſſible to diſannul*. Whatever *great purpoſes* we might think one *cut off in the flower of his Age*, capable of ſerving *in this World*, we may be ſure he judged him capable of ſerving *greater* in the *other*.

And now by this time I believe you will expect to have ſomewhat a more particular Account of *this excellent young Gentleman*, whoſe early Deceaſe hath occaſioned my Diſcourſing ſo largely on this ſubject. Not more largely than the *importance*, but much *leſs accurately*, than the *dignity* of it did challange.

He was the Eldeſt Son of Sir *Charles Hoghton*, of *Hoghton Tower*, in the County of *Lancaſter*,

Baronet, and of the Lady *Mary*, Daughter of the late Lord Viſcount *Maſſerene*, his very Pious Conſort.

A Family of eminent Note in that Northern part of the Kingdom, for its antiquity, opulency, and intereſt in the Country where it is ſeated; and which hath intermarried with ſome or other of the *Nobility*, one Generation after another. But hath been moſt of all conſiderable, and illuſtrious, *as* having been it ſelf, long, the immemorial known ſeat of *Religion*, *Sobriety*, and *Good Order*, from *Father*, to *Son*; giving *Example*, *Countenance*, and *Patronage* to theſe praiſe-worthy things to the Country round about. And wherein, hitherto (through the ſingular favour and bleſſing of Heaven) there hath not been that viſible degeneracy,

neracy, that might be ſo plainly obſerved, and ſadly deplored, in divers great Families. As if it were an exemption from what was ſo anciently remarked by the *Poet*, *Ætas Parentum, pejor avis*, ---- &c. But on the contrary, ſuch as have ſucceeded, have, by a laudable ambition, and emulation, as it were, ſtriven to outſhine ſuch as have gone before them in *Piety*, and *vertue*.

In this bright and lucid tract and line, was this moſt hopeful young Gentleman, now arrived to the Age wherein we uſe to write Man, beginning to ſtand up in view, and to draw the Eyes, and raiſe the hopes of obſervers, and well-wiſhers, as not likely to come ſhort of any of his worthy Anceſtors, and Predeceſſors. But *Heaven* had its Eye upon him too, and both made and judg'd

him meet for an Earlier tranſlation, to a more eminent Station *there*.

He was from his childhood obſerved to be above the common rate, *docile*, of *quick apprehenſion*, *ſolid judgment*, and *retentive memory*, and, betimes, a lover of Books and Learning.

For Religion; *his knowledge of the Principles of it*, continually grew, as his capacity did more & more admit, under the Eye and endeavours of his Parents, and ſuch other Inſtructors, as they took care he ſhould never want. But *his Savour and Reliſh thereof*, and the *impreſſion* made thereby upon his Soul, was ſo deep, and ſo early, as to be apparently owing to an *higher cauſe*, the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, and a ſingular bleſſing thereby, upon his pious Education. And in

this

this way, it could not be eaſie to ſuch as were his moſt diligent, & conſtant obſervers, to conclude, or conjecture, when God firſt began to deal with his Spirit.

Above ten years ago, I had opportunity for a few days, to have ſome converſe with him, in his Fathers Houſe. And, as I could then perceive, his Spirit was much tinctured with Religion; ſo I received information, that for a conſiderable time before, there conſtantly appeared in him ſuch *ſpecimina* of ſerious Piety, as were very *comfortable* to his *Parents*, and might be *inſtructive* to *others*, that took notice of them.

In the courſe of divers following years, he greatly improved, under Domeſtick, and Private Inſtruction, both in Grammar-Learning, and Academical Studies;

dies, for which he wanted not apt helps. When there was great reaſon to hope he was ſo well eſtabliſh't in Religion and Vertue, as neither to be ſhock't by the importunate temptations of a *ſceptical vicious Age in the general*, or betrayed by the facility of his *own youthful Age*. His prudent, worthy Father, judged it requiſite, and not unſafe, to adventure him into a place of more hazard, but greater advantage, for his accompliſhment in that ſort of culture, and poliſhing, that might, in due time, render him both in *reality*, and with *better reputation*, ſerviceable in a Publick Station, *i. e.* where he might gain ſuch knowledge of *the World*, of *Men*, and of the *Laws of his Country*, as were proper for his rank, and one that was to make ſuch a figure in the Nation,

on, as it was to be hoped he might. And upon that Account, not yet a year agoe, brought him up to *London*, entered him in the *Temple*, took for him convenient Lodgings there, and left him ſettled, unto mutual ſatiſfaction.

He was little diverted by the noiſe, novelties, or the gaities of the Town, but ſoon betook himſelf to a courſe of cloſe Study; diſcontinued not his converſe with God, and thereby learn't, and was enabled, to converſe with Men warily, and with caution; ſo as he might be continually improving and gaining good, without doing, or receiving hurt.

The Subſtance of the following Account, I received from a pious intelligent young Man, who ſeveral years attended him before his coming to Town, and after-

afterwards, to the finiſhing of his courſe.

Mr. Hoghton's *early Serioufneſs, increaſed with his years. His deportment was grave, compoſed, without any appearance of Pride, which he carefully avoided. His diligence in Study was unuſual, and his proficiency very great; neither was this leſs an effect of his Conſcientiouſneſs in the improvement of his time, than of his deſire after knowledge.*

As to his demeanour, and performance of Duties, towards his ſeveral Relations, his ſelf denial, his ſedateneſs of mind, his fear of ſin, his tenderneſs of Conſcience, love of the beſt things, and unconcernedneſs about things of an inferior Nature, ſo far as hath fallen under my obſervation, in near ſix

years

years time, I believe few, if any of his years, did exceed him.

In his Sickneſs he was very patient, ſubmiſſively undergoing thoſe heavy ſtroakes it pleaſed God to lay upon him.

Upon his apprehenſion of Death, he ſeemed very little diſcouraged, but quietly reſigned himſelf into the hands of the all-wiſe Diſpoſer of All things.

Some time before his Sickneſs, and in the time of it, he ſaid, Afflictions were very proper for Gods Children. and thoſe that were never Afflicted, had reaſon to queſtion the Truth of their Grace, and Gods Love to them, quoting that Scripture, If ye are without chaſtening, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons.

He often repeated thoſe words, in the beginning of his illneſs.

---'Tis

—'Tis an hard thing to make our Calling, and our Election *ſure.*

— I deſire to glorifie God. —

When he underſtood, from ſome expreſſions of his Phyſician, *how dangerous his Diſtemper was, he ſaid, he knew very well the meaning of his* Phyſicians *words; But that however it proved, he hoped he was ſafe.*

He was ſo ſtrict in the obſervation of the Lords day, that if he happened to lie longer than ordinary in the Morning, he would continue the later in Duties, in the Evening; ſaying, we ought not to make that Day ſhorter than other Days.

Though he was very intent on his Studies, yet on Saturdays *he always broke them off at Noon, and ſpent the Afternoon in reading Divinity, and preparing himſelf for the Lords Day.*

He

He was always constant in his secret Duties, and suffered nothing to hinder him from the performing of them.

Before he expired, he spoke with great assurance of his Future happiness, and hopes of meeting his Relations in Glory. Thus far goes that Account.

His Sickness was short. When, hearing of it, I went to visit him, I was met in an Ante-chamber, by his ingenious, dear, Brother, to whom it is no reproach to be *second* to him, and who, it is to be hoped, will be at least, truly so; making him, though a *fair Example*, yet not a *Standard*; who hath for divers years, been most intimately conjunct, and conversant with him, *known his way, his Spirit, his manner of Life, his purity*: And may be led on, and excited

excited thereby, wherein he hath observed him to *excel others*, to endeavour not to come short, but, if it were possible, to *excel him*; remembring, he is to be the next *solace* of his Parents, *hope* of his Family, and resort of his Country (if God shall vouchsafe to continue him) in succeeding time.

From him, I had little expectation of finding his *Sick Brother* in a conversable condition; the malignity of his Feaver having, before seized his head, and very much disordered his *intellectuals*; but going in, I was much surprized to find it so far otherwise. He presently knew me; & his understanding that served him for little else, failed him not in the concernments of Religion, and of his Soul. There was not an improper or misplac't word (tho'

the

the caſe could not admit of interchanging many) that came from him. Concerning the *ſubſtance of the Goſpel of Chriſt*, (as it could be ſhortly ſummed up to him) he ſaid, *he had no doubt*, and his tranſactions *with Chriſt himſelf*, accepting him; reſigning, and entruſting himſelf abſolutely, and entirely to him, and God in him, were ſo explicite, diſtinct, & clear, as could leave no place of *doubt concerning him*. He profeſt his concurrence to ſuch requeſts, as were put up to God concerning him; and the next Morning, ſlept quietly *in the Lord*.

Nor now will it be unfit, to ſhut up *the Diſcourſe*, with ſome few, ſuitable **Reflections**, upon this double Subject. The *Text*, and *This Providence*, taken together.

1. How happy is it! when *this Power*, of our Great Redeemer, and Lord, mention'd in *the Text*, and a *preparation*, with *chearful willingneſs*, dutifully to comport with it, concur and meet together, as they have done *in this inſtance*. Our Lord hath ſhewn his Power. He *aſſerted it*, in the Text. In this Inſtance he *uſed* it, giving an open Teſtimony, that he takes it to belong to him, to make ſuch tranſlations from *one* World, to *another*, whenſoever he judges it a fit ſeaſon. Nor is ſolicitous, whether men acknowledge his *right*, ſo to do, or no; or what Cenſures they will paſs upon what he hath done. He doth his *own work*, and leaves men to their *own talk*, or mutterings, or wonder, or amuſement at it, as they will. So it becomes *Sovereign Power* to do, *eſtabliſh't* upon the

the moſt *unqueſtionable foundations*; *exercis'd* according to the *wiſeſt and moſt righteous Meaſures*. He hath uſed his *own right*, and ſatisfied himſelf in the uſe of it. He thought not himſelf concern'd to adviſe with any of us, about it, *who, as his Counſellor, ſhould inſtruct him*? Iſa. 40. 13. Rom. 11. v. 34. He *owes* ſo much *to himſelf*, to act as *unaccountable* to no one, nor liable to any ones *controll*.

Here is moſt rightful, reſiſtleſs Power, juſtly and kindly us'd *on the one hand*;

And, *on the other*, how placid, how calm, a reſignation! Here was no ſtriving! no crying! no reluctant motion, no querulous, repining voice. Nothing but peaceful, filial ſubmiſſion; a willingneſs to obey the Summons given.

This was an happy accord, the

willingneſs of this departing Soul, proceeding not from *ſtupidity*, but *truſt*, *in him who kept theſe Keys*; and ſuch *preparedneſs* for removal, as the Goſpel requir'd. O happy Souls! that finding the Key is turning, and opening the door for them, are willing to *go forth* upon *ſuch* terms, as *knowing whom they have believed*,&c. And that neither *principalities or powers ---life or death.--&c. can ever ſeparate them from the Love of God in Chriſt Jeſus their Lord. Life*, they find, hath not ſeparated---whereof was the greater danger; and *Death* is ſo far from making *this ſeparation*, that it ſhall compleat their *Union* with the bleſſed God in Chriſt, and lay them infolded in the everlaſting Embraces of Divine Love! Happy they! that can hereupon welcome Death! and ſay, *Now, Lord, letteſt thou thy Servant*

Servant depart in peace! that, before, only desired *leave to die*, and have, now, obtained it; that are, with certainty of the Issue, at the point of becoming *compleat Victors*, over the last Enemy; and are ready to enter upon their Triumph, and take up their ἐπινίκιον, *Death is swallowed up in Victory. O Death, where is thy sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!* --- *Thanks be to God, who giveth us the Victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Happy Soul! here will be a speedy end of all thy griefs, and sorrows, they will be presently swallow'd up, in an absolute plenitude and fulness of Joy. There is already an end put to thy tormenting cares and fears; for what Object can remain to thee, of a rational fear, when once, *upon grounds* (such as shake not under thee) thou art *reconcil'd to Death*?

This is the moſt glorious ſort of Victory, *viz. by reconciliation.* For *ſo*, thou haſt conquered, not the *Enemy* only, but the *Enmity it ſelf*, by which *he was ſo*. *Death* is become *thy Friend*, and ſo no longer to be feared; nor *is there* any thing elſe, from whence thou art to fear hurt; For Death was *thy laſt Enemy*, even this bodily Death! The whole Region beyond it, is to *one in thy caſe*, *clear*, and *ſerene*, when *to others*, is *reſerved* the *blackneſs of darkneſs for ever*. There are no terrible ὑστερήματα, no formidable conſequences, no reſerves of miſery, no treaſures of wrath to be feared by thee. To one, in thy condition, may that, without
Sen. Tr. heſitation, be apply'd, *nihil metuit, qui optat mori*; *He fears nothing, who deſires to die.* What is the product of ſome mens *infidelity*, is the genuine product of their

their *faith*. From ſo *contrary Cauſes* may proceed the *ſame Effect*. The *Effect*, a willingneſs to die, or a bold adventure upon Death, is *the ſame*, but only in reſpect of the *general kind*; with great differences in the *ſpecial kind*, according to the *difference* and *contrariety* of the *Cauſes*, whereof they diſcernibly taſt and ſavour. *With Infidels*, it is a negative, dead, ſtupid, partial willingneſs, or but a non-averſion; and in a lower, and much diminiſhed degree; Or if ſome preſent, intolerable, diſgraceful calamity urge them, a raſh, obſtinate, preſumptuous ruſhing upon Death; *becauſe they do not conſider conſequences*. *With Believers*, ſuch as in reference to the concernments *of the other World do walk by faith*, while as yet, they cannot walk *by ſight*, in reference to *thoſe things*, 2 Cor.

5. 7. it is a positive, vital, courage,
Θαῤῥοῦμεν. v. 8. *We are confident*, and a preponderating inclination of will; *We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*; because (as is manifest) they *do consider consequences*, and how blessed a state will certainly ensue! How vast are *these special differences*, of the *same thing* in the *general*, *willingness to die*!

O the transports of Joy that do now most rationally result from *this state of the Case*! when there is nothing left, lying between the dislodging Soul, and the *glorious unseen World*, but only the *dark passage of Death*; and *that* so little formidable; considering who hath the Keys of the *one*, and *the other*. How reasonable is it upon the account of somewhat common herein, to the *Redeemer*, and the *Redeemed*, (altho' every thing be

be not) to take up the *following words*, that ſo plainly belong to *this very caſe. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoyceth; my fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope. For thou wilt not leave my Soul in* Sheol, *or* Hades; thou wilt not forſake, or abandon it in that wide World, *neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy one to ſee corruption.* Thou wilt ſhew me the path of Life; the path that leads unto that *preſence of thine*, where is fulneſs of Joy; and *to thoſe pleaſures which are at thy right hand*; or in thy power, and which are for *evermore*; and ſhall never admit either of end, or diminution, *Pſal.* 16. 9, 10, 11.

Now, what do we mean to let our Souls hang in doubt? why do we not drive things for them, to an iſſue? Put them into thoſe *ſame ſafe hands* that *holds theſe Keys*; abſolutely reſign, devote, entruſt,

entruſt, and ſubject them to him; get them bound up in the bundle of Life; ſo adjoyn and unite them to him (not doubting but as we *give them up*, he will, and doth, in that inſtant, *take hold of them*, and receive them into union with himſelf) as that we may *aſſure our hearts*, that becauſe *he lives, we ſhall live alſo.* Thus the ground of *our hope* becomes *ſure*, and of that *joy* which ſprings from ſuch *an hope*. Our *Life*, we may now ſay, *is hid with Chriſt in God* (even *tho' we are*, in our ſelves, *dead*, or dying Creatures) *Col.* 3. 3. Yea, *Chriſt is our Life, and when he, who is our Life, ſhall appear, we ſhall appear with him, in glory*, verſe 4. He hath aſſured us, that *becauſe he is the Reſurrection, and the Life; he that believeth in him, tho' he were dead, ſhall yet live.*

Joh. 14. 19.

Rom. 5. 2.

live. And that, *whoſoever lives, and believes in him,* hath thereby, a life already begun in him, in reſpect whereof *he ſhall never die,* Joh 11. 25, 26. What now can be ſurer than this? *ſo far we are at a certainty,* upon the included ſuppoſition, *i. e. that we believe in him.*

And what now remains to be aſcertain'd? what? Only *our own intervening death?* we muſt, 'tis true *be, abſent from theſe bodies,* or we cannot (as we would) *be preſent with the Lord.* And is *that* all? can any thing now, be more certain than *that?* O happy ſtate of our Caſe! How ſhould our hearts ſpring and leap for our joy, that our affairs are brought into this poſture! that in order to our perfect Bleſſedneſs, nothing is farther wanting but to die. And that the *certainty* of death, compleats

pleats *our aſſurance* of it. What ſhould now hinder our breaking forth into the moſt joyful thankſgivings, *that it is ſo little doubtful we ſhall die!* that we are in no danger of a terreſtrial Immortality! and that the only thing that it remain'd we ſhould be aſſured of, is *ſo very ſure.* That *we are ſure* it is not in the power of all this World, to keep us always in it. That the moſt ſpiteful Enemy we have in all the World, cannot do us that ſpite, to keep us from dying! How glorioufly may good Men triumph, over the impotent malice of their moſt miſchievous enemies, *viz.* that the greateſt miſchief, even in their own Account, that it can ever be *in their power* to do them, is to put it out of their *own power* ever to hurt them more (for they now go quite out of

their

their reach) They can (being permitted,) *kill the body*, and **after that** (Luke 12. 4.) *have no more that they can do.* What a remarkable, ſignificant, **after that**, is this? what a defiance doth it import of the utmoſt Effort of *humane power* and Spite! that *here* it terminates! 'tis now come to its *ne plus ultra*!

And ſo we are to look upon all our other Trials and Afflictions, that in any providential way may befall us; we may be ſick, in pain, in poverty, in diſgrace, but we ſhall not be alwaies *in mortal fleſh*, which is the *ſubtratum*, and the *root* of all the reſt. Can we be upon better terms, having but two things to be concerned about, as neceſſary to our Compleat Felicity, *union with Chriſt*, and *diſunion from theſe bodies*? God is graciouſly ready

ready to assist us, *in reference to the former*, tho' therein he *requires our care*, subserviently hereto: *in reference to the latter*, he will *take care himself*, in his own fit season, without any care or concern of ours in the matter. And only expects us to wait with patience, till that *fit season* Come. And come it will, perhaps, sooner than we may think. He doth not, alwaies, go by *our measures* in judging of the *fit season*; as this present instance shews.

2. From the *text*, taken in conjunction with *this act of providence*, we may observe *the great advantage of a pious Education*. Tho' the best means of *such Education* do not always prove Effectual; yet this being much the *more probable course*, upon which to expect Gods blessing, *than the Parents prophane negli-*

gence

gence of the ſouls of their Children; *ſuch an example*, wherein God by his bleſſing teſtified his approbation of Parental care and diligence; ſhould greatly quicken the endeavours of Parents herein; as hoping, hereby, to ſerve *his* great, and merciful, and moſt principal deſign, *who hath theſe Keys*; and whoſe office it is, to tranſmit Souls, when they are *prepared and ready*, out of this World of ours, into that Bleſſed glorious World above. And, though they may think themſelves diſappointed, when thorough Gods bleſſing upon their endeavours, they have educated one, to ſuch a pitch, as this young Gentleman was raiſed and brought up unto; with a Proſpect, and Hope of his having a long courſe of ſervice to run thro here on the Earth: Yet let Parents

rents hence learn to correct *what was amiſs, or what was wrong*; not what was *right, and well.* Their *Action* and *Endeavour* was, *what ought to be.* Their *Error* or *Miſtake* (if there was any) was more principally, as the Caſe is here ſtated, about their *deſign, and end.* Not *that* they deſigned *ſuch an end,* for *that* alſo was very juſtifiable, and laudable: But if they deſigned it *as their more principal end*; Which the Caſe, as it is now put, ſuppoſes, that is, that they take themſelves to be *diſappointed,* for no Man complains of it *as a diſappointment,* if he miſs of an *inferior end,* and attain that which is *far nobler,* and *more excellent.* Our great aim ſhould be the ſubſerving the deſign of the Great Lord of Heaven and Earth; which ultimately and ſupreamly refers to the heavenly, eternal

ſtate

ſtate *of things*; & that Souls may be *ripen'd* and *fitted* for *that*, and to do ſervice *here on Earth*, ſubordinately to the other; and while they are *in Preparation* for the heavenly ſtate. *His* principal deſign muſt be for *that* which is *principal* And concerning *that* (as was formerly argued) there can be no more doubt than whether *Heaven* or *Earth*, *Eternity* or *Time*, a *fixed*, *permanent*, *everlaſting*, or a temporary, tranſitory, vaniſhing ſtate of things be more valuable, and to be preferred.

Our Redeemer hath acquired, and doth uſe *theſe Keys*, for the tranſlating of Souls, aſſoon as he ſhall judge them *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of Saints in Light*, Col. 1. 12. Some he makes meet much earlier than others. His deſign, ſo far as it is known, or may be ſuppoſed,

ſhould give Meaſure to ours; therefore *ours* muſt be to make them meet, as early, *for his purpoſes*, as is poſſible; as knowing it cannot be *too early*: They were devoted to him early, and purſuantly hereto, no time ſhould be loſt from the great Buſineſs of fitting, and forming them *for him*; inaſmuch alſo, as the *ſame Qualifications, viz.* that are of higheſt Excellency, and Value, do equally prepare them to ſerve, and glorifie him, in *either World*, as he ſhall chuſe to diſpoſe of them. And it unqueſtionably belongs *to him* to *make his Choice*, as it does *to us*, to endeavour to *make them ready*. If any of us, having purpoſely educated *a Son* for the Service of *his Prince*, and preſent him accordingly, we would ſubmit it to his Pleaſure, to *chuſe the Station*, wherein he ſhall ſerve him:

him: Eſpecially if he be a Prince of celebrated Wiſdom, and Goodneſs. And ſhould we complain, That he is *put early*, into a Station of much higher Dignity, than we thought of?

How little is this Matter conſidered, by moſt, that go under the Name of *Chriſtian Parents*; that are (*more generally*) very ſolicitous to have, as they call it, their Children *Chriſt'ned*. But never have it in their Thoughts to have them educated in the Knowledge *of Chriſt*, or train'd up *for Chriſt*. As if their Baptiſm were intended for a Mockery, their Education in the whole courſe of it, hath no ſuch reference. 'Tis how they may with better Reputation, bear up, not the *Name of Chriſt*, but *their own*. Their *Aim*, looks no higher, than that they may inherit their Lands, maintain the Honour

of their Families; appear (if *such* be their *own Rank*) well-accomplisht Gentlemen: And of some of those *little things* that are thought requisite hereto, we may say as *our Saviour* did in another Case, *These things ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other* (the much greater things) *undone.*

What should hinder, but that learning to Sing, or Dance, or Fence, or make a modish Leg, might consist with learning *to know God in Christ, in* which Knowledge *stands Eternal Life!* Whatsoever hath *real Excellency*, or hath any thing in it of *true Ornament*, will no way disagree with the *most serious Christianity*. And how lovely is the Conjunction of the *well-accomplisht Gentleman*, and the *serious Christian!* Only sever *Inconsistencies*, as how *fashionably* to

to Curſe, and Swear, and Damn, and Debauch, which are thought to belong to good Breeding in *our Age*.

Let not *Religion*, *Reaſon*, *Shame*, and *Common Senſe*, be ſo totally abandoned all at once, as that the *ſame Perſons* ſhall take care to have their Children *baptized into Chriſt's Name*, and *be taught* to renounce, *by their Deeds*, that Great *Name*, almoſt aſſoon as they can pronounce *the Word*.

Where ſo direct a Courſe is not taken to make thoſe of the ſucceeding Age *ignominionſly bad*, yet how little is done, towards the making of them *truly*, *and uſefully good*? Much Care is taken to ſhape, and adorn the *out-ſide of the Man*, how little to form, and furniſh *their Minds*! *Here*, if they can be brought to make, or judge of a *Verſe*, or a Jeſt, or a

piece of Wit, 'tis a great Attainment. Or if, at Home, they can have them taught ſo much *Law*, as ſhall, hereafter, enable them to ſqueeze their Tenants, and quarrel with their Neighbours, or ſo much of Behaviour, as ſhall qualifie them to keep Gentlemen Company; Or if (as our *pious Poet* phraſed it) they *Ship them over, the thing is done.* Then, they ſhall be able to talk a little of the Faſhions of this or that *Foreign Country*, and make much the better Figure in *their own.*

But if, with all other parts of *uſeful Knowledge*, and *good Breeding*, that are thought requiſite for *this World*, they be alſo well-inſtructed touching *their Redeemer's* Dominion *over it*, and the *other World alſo*; and concerning the *Nature, Conſtitution, Deſign, Laws*, and *Priviledges* of his *Kingdom*;

Kingdom; If it be ſeriouſly endeavoured to make them apt, and prepared, Inſtruments of ſerving his Intereſt *here*, as long as he ſhall pleaſe to continue them in any Station, *on Earth*; and that they may alſo be made meet to be *Partakers*, at length, of a far more excellent Inheritance, than an earthly Parent could entitle them to, that *of the Saints in Light*, *Col.* 1. 12. If they can be fitted to ſtand in the Preſence of the *Eternal King*, and to keep company with *Angels*, and bleſſed Spirits *above!* How worthy and noble a deſign is this! And with what ſatisfaction is it to be reflected on, if the Parents have ground to apprehend, they are herein, neither unaccepted, nor diſappointed!

3. It is of ill preſage *to our Land*, that when he that *hath theſe Keys*, uſes them in the ſo early tran-

ſlation of ſo hopeful a Perſon as this *young Gentleman* was, *ſo few ſuch* are obſerved to ſpring up, for the ſupport of *the truly Chriſtian Intereſt*, in the ſucceeding Generation. That the *act* of our *Great Redeemer* and Lord, herein, was an act of *Wiſdom, and Counſel*, we cannot doubt. Againſt the *Righteouſneſs* of it, we can have no exception. The *kind deſign* of it, towards them whom he ſo tranſlates, is ſo evident in the viſible agreement of *their ſpirit* and *way*, with the *Heavenly State*, as their *end*, as puts that matter out of queſtion. But we are ſo much the more to dread the conſequences, and to apprehend what may make our *hearts meditate terror*.

By the *Chriſtian Intereſt*, I am far from meaning *that of a Party*. But what every one muſt take for

for *Chriſtianity*, that will acknowledge there is *any ſuch thing*. And for the ſupport of *that*, in the moſt principal *Doctrines*, and *Laws* of it, what is our proſpect?

To go down here ſomewhat lower.

Let us ſuppoſe a *rational ſuſceptibleneſs, or capacity of Religion*, to be the *difference of Man*, wherein the Controverſie may ſeem to admit of being compromis'd; whether it be *Religion*, alone, or *Reaſon*, alone, of which *this* muſt be ſaid, that it diſtinguiſhes *Man* from the *Inferiour Creatures*. And let it be *Reaſon*, with this addition, *an aptneſs* (*ſuſpicere numen*) to be impreſt with ſome *Religious Sentiment*, or to conceive of, and adore, an *Original Being*. The *wiſe, and mighty Author*, and *Cauſe of all things*. And now, how near

akin

akin are *Religion*, and *Humanity*

Let us, *next*, underſtand *Chriſtianity*, to be the *Religion of fal'n Man*, deſigning his Recovery, out of a lapſed, and loſt State; *i. e.*

Man having violated the *Law of his Creation*, and offended againſt the Throne and Government of his Creator, the *Supream*, and *Univerſal Lord of all*. It was reckon'd not becoming ſo great a Majeſty (tho' it was not intended to abandon the Offenders to an Univerſal Ruine, without Remedy) to be reconcil'd, otherwiſe than by a *Mediator* and a *Reconciling Sacrifice*. For which, none being found competent, but the Eternal Son of God, the *Brightneſs of his Glory*, and the *expreſs Image of his own Perſon*, who was alſo the *Firſt* and the *Laſt*, the *Lord God Almighty*; and *partaking*

taking with us of fleſh & blood, was capable, and undertook to be both *Mediator* and *Sacrifice*. It ſeem'd meet to the offended Majeſty, to vouchſafe Pardon and Eternal Life, and the renewing Grace requiſite thereto, to none of the Offenders, but through him; and accept from them no Homage, but on his Account. Requiring whereſoever the Goſpel comes, not only *Repentance towards God*, but *Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as the Summary of the *Counſel of God contain'd therein*, Acts 20. 21–27. And *that all ſhould honour the Son, as he the Father* requires *to be honoured*, John 5. 23.

Whereas now ſo apt a Courſe as this was eſtabliſht, for reſtoring Man to himſelf, and to God, through the Influence of the Bleſſed Spirit, flowing in the Goſpel-Diſpenſation, from Chriſt as the Fountain

Fountain: What doth it portend when, amidſt the clear Light of the *Goſpel*, that affords ſo bright a Diſcovery of the *Glorious Redeemer*, and of all his apt Methods for bringing to *full effect*, his mighty Work of Redemption, an open War is commenc'd againſt *him*, and his whole Deſign, by Perſons, *under Seal*, devoted to him! If there were but one ſingle Inſtance hereof in an Age, who would not, with trembling expect the Iſſue?

But when the *Genius* of a *Chriſtian Nation*, ſeems, in the riſing Generation, to be leading to a general Apoſtacy, *from Chriſtianity*, in its Principal, and *moſt Subſtantial Parts*; and they are only *patient* of ſome *External Rituals*, that belong, or are made appendent to it, ſo as *but to endure them*, either with *Reluctancy*, or *Contempt*.

Contempt. When the *Juvenile Wit*, and *Courage*, which are thought to belong to a Gentleman, entring upon the Stage of the World, are imployed in ſatyrizing upon the Religion, into which they have been Baptiz'd, in *bold Efforts* againſt the *Lord that bought them*! Whither doth this tend!

Some would ſeem ſo modeſt, as in the midſt of their *profane Oaths*, and Violations of the Sacred Name of God, to beg his Pardon, and ſay, *God forgive them.* But ſo *ludicrouſly*, as he whom *Cato* animadverts upon, *For begging Pardon that he wrote in Greek, which he was unacquainted with*; ſaying, *He had rather ask Pardon, than be Innocent*; for what ſhould induce him to do ſo *unneceſſary a thing*, for which Pardon ſhould be *neceſſary*? Corn. Nep. Frag.

ſary? Theſe Men think *Pardons* very cheap things! But *will God be mocked?* Or doth he not obſerve? 'Tis the prevailing Atheiſtical Spirit we are to dread, as that which may provoke Jealouſie, and to make himſelf known by the Judgments he ſhall execute.

There is great reaſon *to hope*, God will not finally abandon *England*. But is there not equal reaſon *to fear*, that before the *Day of Mercy* come, there may be a nearer *Day of Wrath*, coming? A Day that ſhall *burn as an Oven*, and make the Hemiſphere about us, a fiery Vault! In *our Recovery* from a lapſed State, which *the Religion* profeſt among us, aims at; There are two things to be effected. The reſtoring *Reaſon* to its Empire over the *ſenſitive Nature*, that

that *it* may govern *that*; and the *reſtoring Religion*, and *Love to God*, to its Place and Power, that *he may govern us*. While the *former* is not done, we remain ſunk into the low Level, with the *Inferior Creatures*; and till the *latter* be effected, we are ranked with the *Apoſtate Creatures*, that firſt fell from God. The *Senſualty* of *Brutes*, and the *Enmity of Devils*, riſing, and ſpringing up obſervably among us, import the directeſt Hoſtility, againſt the *Redeemer's Deſign*. And them that bid this open Defiance to Him, he hath every Moment at his Mercy!

In the mean time, *Is this* Emmanuel's *Land*? His Right in us he will not diſclaim. And becauſe he claims it, we may expect him to vindicate himſelf. His preſent

preſent Patience, we are to aſcribe to the *Wiſdom*, and *Greatneſs* of an *All-comprehending Mind*. He counts not an heap of impotent Worms his Match! But when the *Beſom of Deſtruction* comes, one ſtroak of it will ſweep away Multitudes. Then Contempt will be Anſwered with Contempt. They cannot expreſs *higher*, than to oppoſe and militate againſt a *Religion*, introduc'd and brought into the World by ſo Clear, Divine Light, Luſtre and Glory, not by *Arguments*, but by *Jeaſts!* O that we could but ſee their Arguments, to diſpute *thoſe Keys*, out of his Hands that holds them! But do they think to *laugh* away the Power of the Son of God? *He alſo will laugh at their Calamity*, &c. *Prov.* 1. or expoſe them to the Laughter of

of Men wiſer than they, *Pſal.* 52. 5, 6. 'Tis little *wit* to *deſpiſe* what they cannot *diſprove*. When we find a connection between *Death*, and *Judgment*, how will they contrive to diſ-joyn them? They will be as little able to *diſprove the one*, as *withſtand the other*.

But a great reſidue, 'tis to be hoped, *our Bleſſed Redeemer* will, in due time, conquer in the moſt merciful way, inſpiring them with *Divine Wiſdom*, and *Love*, detecting their Errours, mollifying their hardneſs, ſubduing their enmity, making them gladly ſubmit to his eaſie Yoke, and light Burden. He is, before the World end, to have a numerous Seed, and we are not to deſpair of their riſing up more abundantly *than* hitherto among our ſelves, ſo as no Man ſhall be

therefore asham'd to be thought a *serious Christian*, because 'tis an *unfashionable*, or an *ungenteel* thing.

Then will honour be acquir'd, by living as one that believes a Life to come, and expects to live for ever, as Devoted ones, to the *Ruler of both Worlds*, and Candidates for a blessed Immortality, under his Dominion. Nor will any Man covet to leave a better Name behind him, *here*, or a more honourable Memorial of himself, than by having liv'd an holy, vertuous Life. It signifies not nothing, with *the many, to be remembred when they are gone.* Therefore is this *Trust* wont to be committed to Marbles, and Monumental Stones. *Some* have been *so wise*, to prefer a remembrance *among them that were so*, from their having liv'd

to

to ſome valuable purpoſe. When *Rome* abounded with Statues, and *Memorative Oblisks*, *Cato* forbad any to be ſet up for him, becauſe (he ſaid) he had rather it ſhould be askt, *why had he not one?* than *why he had?* *Plutarch de gerund. R pub.*

What a balmy Memory will one Generation leave to another, when *the ſavour of the Knowledge of Chriſt ſhall be diffuſed in every plate*! 2 Cor. 2. 14. and every thing be counted as *droſs and dung*, that is in any competition with *the excellency of that Knowledge*; when that ſhall overflow the World, and one Age praiſe his Mighty Works, and proclaim his Power and Greatneſs to the next. And the Branches of Religious Families, whether ſooner or later tranſplanted, ſhall leave an odour, when they are cut off, that ſhall demonſtrate their *nearer*

Union, with *the true Vine*, or ſpeak their relation to the *Tree of Life*, *whoſe Leaves are for the healing of the Nations*, even thoſe that were deciduous, and have dropt off, may (without ſtraining a borrow'd expreſſion) ſignifie ſomewhat towards this purpoſe.

4. *From both the mention'd Subjects, Good Parents* may learn, to do *God*, and *their Redeemer*, all the ſervice they can, and have opportunity for, *in their own time*; without reckoning too much upon what ſhall be done, by a well-educated, hopeful Son, after they are gone, unleſs the like diſpenſation could be pleaded unto that which God gave to *David*, to reſerve the Building of the *Temple to his Son Solomon*, which without as expreſs a revelation, no Man can pretend. The *Great Keeper of theſe Keys*, may croſs

ſuch

ſuch purpoſes; and without excuſing the *Father*, diſmiſs *the Son*, firſt. But *his Judgments are a great deep*, too deep for our Line. *And his Mercy is in the Heavens*, Pſal. 36. extending *from everlaſting to everlaſting, upon them that fear him: and his Righteouſneſs unto Childrens Children*, Pſal. 103.

FINIS.

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